

ACT II, SCENE 4, LINE 123.



**THE CAXTON EDITION OF
THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

WITH ANNOTATIONS AND
A GENERAL INTRODUCTION
BY SIDNEY LEE

VOLUME XI

THE TRAGEDY OF KING RICHARD II
THE LIFE AND DEATH OF KING JOHN



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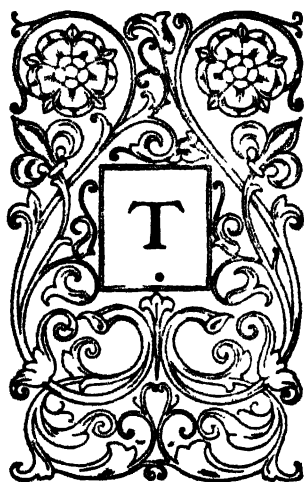
**THE TRAGEDY OF
KING RICHARD II**

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INTRODUCTION



THE literary interest of this play, separated as it can be according to the wise ordinance of this edition from non-literary considerations, may be fairly considered from three points of view,—two of them necessary and proper, the third accidental, after a fashion, but almost appertaining to that class of accident which logicians call inseparable. Placing this between the other two, their order will be: First, the position, according to literary considerations only, of the play in Shakespeare's work; secondly, its relation to Marlowe's "Edward II"; thirdly, its intrinsic and absolute value for us. All three, as in all such cases, have to do with each other; but in this order of treatment we can subsume, and if necessary repeat, the results of the earlier examinations in the later.

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To begin with "Richard II" as a "stage" of Shakespeare. That it is an early one, external and, so to speak non-literary testimony establishes, with a certainty not always at our service, in the fact of the date of the earliest quarto (1597), and the mention by Meres (1598); but without these, internal evidence—not of the fantastically minute, but of the general and convincing kind—would assure us that these dates are not only not too early, but in all probability not quite early enough.

The whole *ordonnance* and handling of the play, whether we look at plot, character, diction, or versification, speak a period at which the poet has already learned a great deal, but has not learned everything. He has already—we shall dwell more on this later—acquired the full disposition of the chronicle-play after a fashion which nobody but himself had yet shown; but he has not discovered the full secret of diversifying and adorning it. The historic page is translated into a dramatic one with the indefinable mastery—in adjusting to the theatre the "many actions of many men" at many places and times—which perhaps no other dramatist has ever fully shown. But, to mention nothing else, there is a want of tragi-comic relief; the history, interesting as it is, is still too much of a *mere* history. So, in the second respect, the poet has left his predecessors, and even to some extent himself, far behind in the art of breathing a soul into the figures of the historic tapestry; but he has not yet made it, as he was to make it later, a wholly complete and individual soul. Of the central

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figure we shall speak anon ; but it is almost more important that the accessories, though never mere "supers," still lack that full Shakespearean individuality "in the round" of which the poet is so prodigal later. The Queen is a gracious sketch ; it requires the enthusiasm of the commentator to detect much that is very distinct even in Bolingbroke. Aumerle, a character of which Shakespeare later would at least probably have made a very striking and subtle portrait, remains enigmatic ; or rather not so much enigmatic as with no enigmas or problems posed. They have, many of them, the rudiments of the great Shakespearean quality of "setting the principal character going" ; but as that character itself is not fully worked out, so their powers are not fully called into action. They help to show us further developments of Richard's incurable "redelessness," as one great contemporary of his had called it ; they give occasion to the feeble flashes and the constant breakdowns of the *lepus non leopardus*, as he had been called by another contemporary, ingenious if not so great. But in their case, as in his, the last vivifying touch has not quite been put.

The same interesting character of transition is over the diction, in the wider sense, and the verse. The latter is far advanced beyond the chaos of the earliest plays, where rhyme and blank verse, "fourteeners" and sheer doggerel, lyrical measures and prose, jostle each other as Shakespeare successively and impartially experiments with the imperfect implements of his predecessors. The blank verse itself has made great strides ; it is one of the

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most noticeable points of that contrast with Marlowe, to which we shall come presently, that Shakespeare has improved upon the stately staccato of the "dead shepherd" almost as much as Marlowe himself had improved in his normal passages on the not even stately stump of "Gorboduc." But it is still not perfectly flexible and cursive; it has not completely mastered the secrets of the pause, and the varied trisyllabic and disyllabic foot, and the consequent verse paragraph. There is more rhyme than there need be; there is even the quatrain, which hardly even Dryden, in his first flush of passion for rhyme on the stage, would have ventured to endorse. And on the other hand, there is no (or next to no) prose — that remarkable provider of relief, appetite, and many other good things in the intervals of tragic verse. The longer speeches still possess something, nay much, of that *tirade* character — that rhetorical rather than poetical *ordonnance* — which disappears so marvellously in the tragedies of the greatest time even where rhetoric was almost excusable.

The diction of the play, from the present point of view, is a subject almost more interesting, but much more delicate and uncertain. Speaking from many years' reading, I should say that "Richard II" is the most *carefully* written of all Shakespeare's plays. A certain constraint is over almost all of it — over all of it perhaps, except some of those passages which, for any evidence that we have, may be of much later date than the bulk of the piece. There is nothing of the almost

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riotous variety and license of the earliest dramas. There is marked abstinence, as a rule — of course with exceptions — from that play on words which, as some would have it, was the very breath of Shakespeare's nostrils. The Marlowesque magniloquence appears; but it is almost always studiously toned, adjusted, clarified. In short, in this, as in other matters, the poet is between his two periods of freedom, and in one, as it were, almost of pupilage. He is afraid, perhaps he does not even wish, to "let himself go." He breaks away and soars sometimes, but not very often, in the direction of sublimity; he scarcely ever breaks away in the other direction of homeliness. He is, on the lines which he is following, almost "correct." And the worst that can be said of the play is that this approach to correctness brings with it the inevitable concomitant of a certain loss of colour.

It is probable that this correctness — not less relatively certain because it is not according to the Three Unities — has done the piece harm with some critics in the inevitable comparison with Marlowe's "Edward II." Shakespeare has despised, as he always did despise, the illegitimate attractions; and there is nothing answering to Edward's fatal passion for Gaveston to excuse — if it can be called excuse — the misdoings of Edward's great-grandson. And Shakespeare was already discarding, though he had not yet quite discarded, the *incomprehensibility* of Marlowe. That mighty but incomplete and far from universal genius always, as his continuer in the next generation said, "threw himself headlong into clouds" and abode in them, with the profit as with

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the disadvantage of his dwelling-place. Lamb may be right in taking the pathos of Edward's ghastly and degrading end as greater than that of the final moment, which becomes Richard better than any passage of his happier life. But the decision is at least open to argument. Lamb, exquisite critic as he was, was always a little liable to the exquisite critics' sin of preferring what the vulgar do not know to what they do, and in his time Marlowe was all but utterly unknown. In almost every other respect "Richard II" seems to me to have the advantage. Any disjointedness in it — and there is not so very much — sinks out of sight beside the absolute patchwork of Marlowe's play, both in plot and character. In the former respect the earlier dramatist has hardly even come near the secret of the chronicle-play, which in our text Shakespeare has nearly, if not quite, mastered. In character the failure to "join the flats" is more obvious still. Richard, as we have admitted, is rather more an assemblage of traits or studies, admirably drawn for the composition of a type of the frivolous and irresolute, but æsthetically capable, king, than an individual. But Edward is three gentlemen (and three rather incompatible gentlemen) at once or in succession, — a contemptible indulger in an unworthy affection, a haughty and despotic Plantagenet, and a meek and persecuted victim. Isabel is worse. For half the play and more she is a true and loving wife, suffering, but proof against, the coldness, and worse, of her despicable husband. Then without a word to mark the transition, she becomes a murderous adulteress. Her lover, Morti-

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mer, is more characterless than even the least characterful person of any consequence in our play; and the same may be said of Gaveston, while the rest pretend to nothing and achieve what they pretend to. There are splendid speeches; but the best is not superior to several that are found here. And the play as a whole — immense as is its advance upon anything that we have certainly or probably anterior to it — is, after all, mainly interesting, not like “Tamburlaine” and “Faustus” and the “Jew of Malta,” for itself, but because of its position in turn as a stepping-stone of vantage to Shakespeare.”¹

We may therefore turn with a clear conscience to the principal object of this paper, the appreciation of “Richard II” in and for itself. Only a careful and continuous reading of its remarkable kind from “Kyng Johan” to “Perkin Warbeck” will show clearly how far Shakespeare has in it got towards the perfection of “Henry V,” or even of the highest example of the style — an example not usually reckoned of it and undoubtedly crossed with the romantic drama — “Antony and Cleopatra.” He was something of a novice even as compared with

¹ I have thought it better not to attempt examination of the problem — only recently posed, and with its documents not yet easily accessible to the ordinary reader — of the relation of our play to the piece found in the Egerton MS. 1994, printed by Halliwell in a few copies, and by Herr Keller in the “Jahrbuch” of the German Shakespeare Society for 1899, and excellently handled by Professor Boas in the “Fortnightly Review” for September, 1902. Without citation and expatiation, for which there is here no room, such examination would be unprofitable and almost unintelligible. Only the latter part of this piece overlaps our play, and the better opinion seems to be that Shakespeare did not so much use it as a canvas for his own work as presupposed knowledge of it on the part of his audience.

himself in "Henry V"; much more as compared with himself when he wrote "I am dying, Egypt, dying," and

"Peace, peace !

Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep ? "

He was denied the patriotic interest of the first play and the intensely human interest of the second. He denied himself, as has been said, the artful aid of tragicomic by-plot and by-character. He had no hero in the old sense ; Bolingbroke, though wronged undoubtedly, is as undoubtedly an usurper, and does and says nothing to conciliate the readers' or spectators' interest. He was not yet able — or he did not yet attempt — to make of Richard, in his inferior way, what he has made of Hamlet and Lear and Othello ; what he has almost made of Leontes and quite of Prospero. Yet he has done wonders.

In the first place, as said above, the story *runs*. It is not mere tapestry ; it is tapestry — so to speak — cinematographed. The scenes are not disjointed ; the personages are not dead ; they do not appear merely promiscuous. Already the minor incidents — the fruitless appeal of the Duchess of Gloucester to York, which breaks her heart and deprives him of her support at the pinch ; the quarrel of Fitzwater and Aumerle — have something, if not quite enough, of that almost demoniacal expertness of interweaving which makes the smallest by-play of the later dramas conducive somehow to the end.* The purple patches of poetry are not merely scattered anyhow ; they serve to fix the wandering and revive the sated attention ; to hand the reader on from act to act

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and scene to scene until the end. For a play so destitute of comic attraction—even “Richard III” is not its parallel here, for the mighty scene of the seduction of Anne puts in sufficient security, in a kind saturnine and tragicomic indeed, but still comic enough—the hold which it has on the reader is extraordinary. We are not impatient even of “Bushy, Bagot here, and Green,” though they are surely either the most audaciously insignificant villains, or the best good men with a total absence of attractiveness and an undeserved fate, that poet or dramatist or novelist ever drew. They produce the effect of being, what they very probably were, quite respectable under-secretaries; and yet we can read them with patience, such as the under-secretary of real life rarely wins. The bickerings of Bolingbroke and Mowbray, the minor bickerings of Fitzwater and Aumerle, the ineffectual honesty of old York, the half-diplomatic, half-hypocritical meekness of Bolingbroke when he appears on his promotion,—all these things have very little interest in themselves. Yet in some strange way they are readable without the least effort, whereas the minor drama of this kind and time requires direct and sometimes enormous effort to screw oneself to its perusal. And of other parts, and some speeches even of these parts, something very different has to be said.

It is probable that, if any explanation is to be sought of this beyond the simplest and perhaps wisest one, this interest after all depends on the projection of the title-character, imperfect as that character may seem beside Hamlet or Lear. The modern historian, I believe, is

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apt to doubt whether this projection is entirely fair; a doubt which, it will be remembered, was anticipated generally by a much more agreeable person than the modern historian, Miss Diana Vernon, in her complaint of Shakespeare's "Lancastrian partialities." Richard, they say now, was not so much a mere petulant weakling as a statesman before his time, who tried to break the power of the feudal nobles and to govern by a "government." But this, even if it had been likely to enter Shakespeare's head — and it would be rash indeed to say that anything was *not* likely to enter that head — would have been very unlikely indeed to enter the head of any of his historical authorities, and would besides have been a very doubtfully dramatisable conception. The question is how far Shakespeare, taking Richard as a type of royal *impotentia* — of the alternate excesses and defects of a weak and luxurious nature — has given a satisfactory portraiture. I venture to think that the dissatisfaction which is sometimes expressed is rather a case of those "second" thoughts which, as the wisest have decided, are not "best" at all; though the third, which are corrected firsts, often are. It is the essence of Richard that he has *no* essence, no ruling passion, no predominant vice, no character at all. The moods chase each other over his temperament as "waves of shadow go over the wheat," and with as little connection or permanent record. He is irresolute; but his irresolution, when he is irresolute, is not, like that of Hamlet, an inability to decide on and adopt means while quite clearly perceiving the end, but an entire want of certainty of pur-

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pose, of perception of an end, altogether. He is *impotens* — impulsively petulant and ungovernable. But this other vice of his is again not, like that of Lear, an ever-present curse, excusable almost as a natural infirmity; for he can, for instance, devise and sustain a course of deliberate and elaborate diplomacy, not to say hypocrisy, in the Bolingbroke-Mowbray case. He is thus really a King of shreds and patches. The only continuity possible is given to him by the insinuation into our minds — really a very great triumph of art for all it be so hidden — of a willingness to believe him one and whole and possible. The “suspension of disbelief” is complete. At first, despite the ugly glimpses of treachery and tyranny which are needed to warn us of the future and justify it, he is a dignified and intelligent monarch enough. It would be difficult to prescribe a course of outward conduct in the circumstances more respectable. The deathbed scene with John of Gaunt brings out the hints that have been given of the worse side of his character; but he recovers some respect for enterprise, if not exactly for wisdom, by undertaking so unpleasant and ungrateful a task as an Irish expedition was already well known to be. The collapse — the revolution from headstrong tyrant to self-pitying and impotent sentimentalist — is accounted for with a sufficiency of circumstance which is, as a rule, wanting entirely in the earlier and too often in the later Elizabethan drama. He has no root; and he withers away under the repeated sunstrokes of the invasion of Bolingbroke, the defection of the lords, the melting away of

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Salisbury's forces, the submission of York to the enemy, and the execution of his friends. Henceforward he *does* nothing till his last too late outburst of despairing bravery. He only talks, but he does this with surprising versatility and extraordinary effect. It may be very much doubted whether Shakespeare knew much or anything of the direct and enthusiastic interest in literature which Chaucer and Gower and Froissart had all experienced from Richard ; but he has given Richard himself what is kindly called "the literary temperament" with a vengeance. The King only loses the right to say *Qualis artifex pereo* because, luckily for him, at the moment when he perishes he ceases to be an artist and becomes once more a man. From the moment when he lands at Barkloughly Castle the histrionic mood, accompanied by a wonderful gusto and self-identification, is upon him. He begins by a beautiful "Address of a Monarch returning to his Realm and Beset by Traitors," follows it up by another—one of the finest things if not quite the finest class in Shakespeare—on the divinity of monarchy itself; and that by an exquisite act of humiliation and self-abandonment,—the poetical quality of these *tirades* rising as the moral thermometer of the speaker falls, till the weak wing drops suddenly in the merely splenetic and at last truly personal outburst,

"By heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly,
That bids me be of comfort evermore!"

Here the last of the Plantagenets becomes a mere Sir Francis Clavering,—who, indeed, was of an excellent

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family and doubtless had, like others, Plantagenet blood in him. He recovers his rhetoric and almost his poetry at the parley on the walls of Flint, and becomes, in the famous speech accepting his deposition, again quite exquisitely pathetic; so much so that we think he can no further go. But Shakespeare can; and the actual deposition scene, rising ever and ever to the "mockery king of snow" passage that crowns it, would be as intolerably agonising as "Lear" itself if we did not know the very different facts. The parting with the Queen, much more subdued, is in the same style; and the key is kept with a skill almost diabolic or almost divine in York's description — the most famous passage of the many famous ones in the play — of the entry into London. Only the chill of Pontefract frees him from this *histrionica passio*. Some may see traces of it in the long soliloquy, full of fantastic conceits, which opens the murder scene. I cannot agree with them. In the shadow of death he is at last undazzled; and if he gropes a little at first in thought one may pardon him. Nothing, I think, can be more hopelessly uncritical than to despise the bitter jests to the faithful groom, "Thanks, noble peer!" and the malediction on the ingratitude of roan Barbary, as trivial. These things are natural; there is no rhetoric about them; and they bring with them the sting of reflection on his own tameness which rouses him to die like his father's son and like a King of England.

Is it paradoxical to hold that for the better hooking together of patches so purple a "King of patches" was required? That if Richard had had greater unity some

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sacrifice of show-passages must have resulted? And is it presumptuous to suggest that Shakespeare was probably at this time young enough not to care to sacrifice his purple patches on the one hand, and on the other too young quite to know how to bring them in, as he brings them in later, so that they are not patches at all? I should be quite content to abide his own judgment on the point.

The subordination of the other characters to this un-central centre has been glanced at; but it is noteworthy enough for a further glance. The almost suppression — important as is his part and frequently as he figures — of Bolingbroke is very curious. Except in the scenes with Norfolk, where he is playing a part in two senses, and in the parting with his father, where both are allowed more than patches of the purple so freely displayed elsewhere, his outline seems to be left colourless, not so much by accident as of design. Miss Diana Vernon might have said that Shakespeare could find no attractive way of presenting him distinctly, and so exercised his Lancastrian partiality in leaving him indistinct. His father, a masterly fragment, is a fragment only; and the amiable imbecility of Edmund of York is faithfully and almost daringly photographed. One scene — the family squabble between himself and his Duchess over the rather passive body of their son Aumerle — is one of the few in Shakespeare which rather perilously approach the ridiculous that is not meant to be so — another sign of immaturity. But there is hardly any such in the sketch of the little Queen Isabel, whom Shakespeare has

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skilfully abstained from representing as the mere child she was, while indicating her youthfulness and at the same time indirectly rebutting the scandal introduced by Bolingbroke in his sentence on Green and Bushy. Of the minor characters the hopeless, faded figure of the Duchess of Gloucester — faithful unto death but uselessly — and the steady loyalty of the Bishop of Carlyle attract most attention. But it is practically evident that the poet took very little trouble to attract much upon them. With such a main figure and such accessories it is clear that the drama cannot be expected to affect us as do some others, even some probably earlier than itself. It is, as has been said, the purest *history* of them all. Even the enigmatical and disputed “Henry VI” has episodes and characters which approach nearer to pure tragedy, while, as has been said also, “Richard II” never approaches pure comedy or any comedy at all. It can then affect us only in two ways; first, by its story, its actual historic tale, and we need not repeat that it does that most satisfactorily. Its other possible appeal is the appeal of sheer poetry — of rememberable and delectable lines and passages. Hardly anybody can need to be told that it answers this test triumphantly. There is scarcely a play of the canonical seven and thirty that is more open to the reproach of being “made up of quotations.” From the very first line onwards, but especially from the parting colloquy of Gaunt and Bolingbroke with the speech

“ All places that the eye of heaven visits,”

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and the still more famous retort about "the frosty Caucasus"; Richard's invidious but most effective sketch of Bolingbroke's popularity-hunting; the magnificent eulogium-invective of Gaunt on England and against Richard; the King's sarcastic inquiry, one of the numerous passages where Shakespeare shows how he, like all wise men, was perfectly aware of what fools call faults in them,

"Can sick men play so nicely with their names?"

—all these things came before the end of the first scene of the second act. Later, all the passages enumerated above as characteristic of Richard's presentment contain "beauties" as do many others; and I do not know that the famous first line of Richard's last scene and sub-scene,

"The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee!"

is not, for all its lameness and deviousness, one of Shakespeare's lesser triumphs. For if it be a fond and vain heresy to maintain that poetry must always use the language of common life, there can be no doubt that there are times when the language of common life is the highest poetry; and this unreverend colloquialism is, as it were, the final explosion of the King's rhetoric, the tearing off of his mask, the appearance of his real and virile speech and personage.

The "preceptists" of criticism, as the Spaniards call them, may complain, if they like, that a play of such construction and such appeals lacks alike the true classi-

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cal and the true romantic virtue — that it is a nondescript and therefore not to be approved. Let us not balk our enjoyment with any such fantastic niceness. One would indeed have been sorry had Shakespeare seen fit not to outgo the scheme and scale of “Richard II.” Among the plays that come nearest to it, it is certainly inferior to “King John”; and its merits, though more even, do not approach the highest of those of the more irregular, more chaotic, and very much more stagey “Richard III.” The almost entire absence of the proper attraction of feminine character would in any case tell heavily against it even in comparison with these plays themselves — with Constance and with Margaret and with Anne. Of the still higher romantic interest of still greater dramas it has absolutely nothing; and one must again and again return to the curious way in which Shakespeare has here, and here alone, said, as it were, to the fanatics against tragi-comedy: “Well, take your tragedy without your comedy for once, and see how you like it!” But to those who can be contented with what a thing is, instead of wishing it to be something it is not, “Richard II” has no small attractions; and these are very greatly heightened to those perhaps sophisticated tastes which like to take “what it is” to pieces and see the origin of their pleasure if they can.

GEORGE SAINTSBURY.

**THE TRAGEDY OF
KING RICHARD II**

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ¹

KING RICHARD the Second.

JOHN OF GAUNT, Duke of Lancaster, }
EDMUND OF LANGLEY, Duke of York, } uncles to the King.

HENRY, surnamed BOLINGBROKE, Duke of Hereford, son to John
of Gaunt; afterwards KING HENRY IV.

DUKE OF AUMERLE, son to the Duke of York.

THOMAS MOWBRAY, Duke of Norfolk.

DUKE OF SURREY.

EARL OF SALISBURY.

LORD BERKLEY.

BUSHY, }
BAGOT, } servants to King Richard.
GREEN, }

EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

HENRY PERCY, surnamed Hotspur, his son.

LORD ROSS.

LORD WILLOUGHBY.

LORD FITZWATER.

Bishop of Carlisle.

Abbot of Westminster.

Lord Marshal.

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP.

SIR PIERCE of Exton.

Captain of a band of Welshmen.

QUEEN to King Richard.

DUCHESS OF YORK.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

Lady attending on the Queen.

Lords, Herald, Officers, Soldiers, two Gardeners, Keeper, Messenger, Groom, and other Attendants.

SCENE: England and Wales

¹ Four editions of the play in Quarto (1597, 1598, 1608, 1615) were published before the First Folio in 1623. The Third Quarto supplied important additions. (See Act IV, Sc. i, lines 154-318.) The First Folio divided the piece into Acts and Scenes for the first time. A list of "dramatis personæ" was first given by Rowe in 1709.

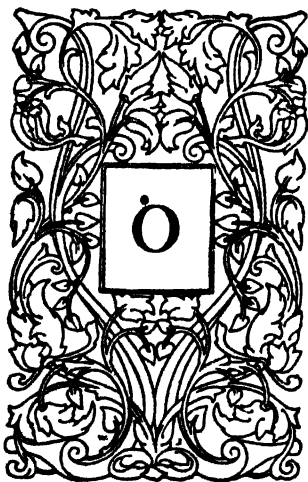


ACT FIRST — SCENE I — LONDON

KING RICHARD'S PALACE

Enter KING RICHARD, JOHN OF GAUNT, *with other Nobles and Attendants*

KING RICHARD



LD JOHN OF GAUNT,
time-honour'd Lancaster,
Hast thou, according to thy oath
and band,
Brought hither Henry Hereford
thy bold son,
Here to make good the boister-
ous late appeal,
Which then our leisure would
not let us hear,
Against the Duke of Norfolk,
Thomas Mowbray?

GAUNT. I have, my liege.

K. RICH. Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him,
If he appeal the duke on ancient malice;

¹ *Old John of Gaunt*] John of Gaunt (or Ghent), Duke of Lancaster, was born in 1340. He was therefore no more than fifty-eight in 1398, the year to which the events in this scene belong.

Or worthily, as a good subject should, 10
On some known ground of treachery in him ?

GAUNT. As near as I could sift him on that argument,
On some apparent danger seen in him
Aim'd at your highness, no inveterate malice.

K. RICH. Then call them to our presence; face to
face,
And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear
The accuser and the accused freely speak:
High-stomach'd are they both, and full of ire
In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.

Enter BOLINGBROKE and MOWBRAY

BOLING. Many years of happy days befall 20
My gracious sovereign, my most loving liege !

Mow. Each day still better other's happiness;
Until the heavens, envying earth's good hap,
Add an immortal title to your crown !

K. RICH. We thank you both : yet one but flatters us,
As well appeareth by the cause you come ;

2 *band*] obligation; "band" and "bond" were both used indifferently in this sense. Cf. V, ii, 65, *infra*, where the early Quartos read *band* and the Folios read *bond*. In V, ii, 67, all the early editions read *bond*.

3 *Hereford*] This word is treated as a dissyllable throughout the play.

4 *the boisterous late appeal*] the recent accusation violently urged. In lines 9, 27, and elsewhere *infra*, "appeal" is used as a verb for "accuse."

12 *argument*] theme.

22 *Each day . . . happiness*] May each day surpass the happiness of its predecessor.

26 *the cause you come*] the business you come about.

Namely, to appeal each other of high treason.
Cousin of Hereford, what dost thou object
Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

BOLING. First, heaven be the record to my speech! 30
In the devotion of a subject's love,
Tendering the precious safety of my prince,
And free from other misbegotten hate,
Come I appellant to this princely presence.
Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee,
And mark my greeting well; for what I speak
My body shall make good upon this earth,
Or my divine soul answer it in heaven.
Thou art a traitor and a miscreant,
Too good to be so, and too bad to live, 40
Since the more fair and crystal is the sky,
The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly.
Once more, the more to aggravate the note,
With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat;
And wish, so please my sovereign, ere I move,
What my tongue speaks my right drawn sword may
prove.

Mow. Let not my cold words here accuse my zeal:
'T is not the trial of a woman's war,
The bitter clamour of two eager tongues,
Can arbitrate this cause betwixt us twain; 50
The blood is hot that must be cool'd for this:
Yet can I not of such tame patience boast

40 *Too good to be so*] Of too noble a descent to be so wicked.

43 *aggravate the note*] add to, intensify, the stigma or disgrace.

46 *right drawn sword*] sword drawn in a righteous cause.

As to be hush'd and nought at all to say:
First, the fair reverence of your highness curbs me *
From giving reins and spurs to my free speech;
Which else would post until it had return'd
These terms of treason doubled down his throat.
Setting aside his high blood's royalty,
And let him be no kinsman to my liege,
I do defy him, and I spit at him; 60
Call him a slanderous coward and a villain:
Which to maintain I would allow him odds,
And meet him, were I tied to run afoot
Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps,
Or any other ground inhabitable,
Where ever Englishman durst set his foot.
Mean time let this defend my loyalty,
By all my hopes, most falsely doth he lie.

BOLING. Pale trembling coward, there I throw my
gage,

Disclaiming here the kindred of the king; 70
And lay aside my high blood's royalty,
Which fear, not reverence, makes thee to except.
If guilty dread have left thee so much strength
As to take up mine honour's pawn, then stoop:
By that and all the rites of knighthood else,
Will I make good against thee, arm to arm,
What I have spoke, or thou canst worse devise.

Mow. I take it up; and by that sword I swear,

59 *let him be*] assuming that he were.

63 *tied*] obliged.

65 *inhabitable*] uninhabitable, unfit for habitation.

Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder,
I'll answer thee in any fair degree, 80
Or chivalrous design of knightly trial:
And when I mount, alive may I not light,
If I be traitor or unjustly fight!

K. RICH. What doth our cousin lay to Mowbray's
charge?

It must be great that can inherit us
So much as of a thought of ill in him.

BOLING. Look, what I speak, my life shall prove it
true;

That Mowbray hath received eight thousand nobles
In name of lendings for your highness' soldiers,
The which he hath detain'd for lewd employments, 90
Like a false traitor and injurious villain.
Besides I say and will in battle prove,
Or here or elsewhere to the furthest verge
That ever was survey'd by English eye,
That all the treasons for these eighteen years
Complotted and contrived in this land
Fetch from false Mowbray their first head and spring.
Further I say, and further will maintain
Upon his bad life to make all this good,
That he did plot the Duke of Gloucester's death, 100

82 *light*] alight, dismount.

85 *inherit us*] put us in possession. "Inherit" often means "own" or "possess," as II, i, 83, *infra*; but here that meaning has a causative force.

89 *In name of lendings*] Under the guise of loans.

100 *the Duke of Gloucester's death*] Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, Edward III's youngest son, and King Richard's uncle,

Suggest his soon-believing adversaries,
And consequently, like a traitor coward,
Sluiced out his innocent soul through streams of blood:
Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries,
Even from the tongueless caverns of the earth,
To me for justice and rough chastisement;
And, by the glorious worth of my descent,
This arm shall do it, or this life be spent.

K. RICH. How high a pitch his resolution soars!
Thomas of Norfolk, what say'st thou to this? 110

Mow. O, let my sovereign turn away his face,
And bid his ears a little while be deaf,
Till I have told this slander of his blood,
How God and good men hate so foul a liar.

K. RICH. Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears:
Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir,
As he is but my father's brother's son,
Now, by my sceptre's awe, I make a vow,
Such neighbour nearness to our sacred blood
Should nothing privilege him, nor partialize 120
The unstooping firmness of my upright soul:
He is our subject, Mowbray; so art thou:
Free speech and fearless I to thee allow.

Mow. Then, Bolingbroke, as low as to thy heart,
Through the false passage of thy throat, thou liest.

in reality engaged in a plot against King Richard along with both Mowbray and Bolingbroke. Mowbray betrayed the conspiracy to King Richard, who commissioned him to put the Duke of Gloucester out of the way. The Duke was clandestinely slain at Calais in 1397.

101 *Suggest . . . adversaries*] Incite the Duke's credulous enemies.

113 *slander of his blood*] slanderer of his kindred.

Three parts of that receipt I had for Calais
Disbursed I duly to his highness' soldiers;
The other part reserved I by consent,
For that my sovereign liege was in my debt
Upon remainder of a dear account, 130
Since last I went to France to fetch his queen:
Now swallow down that lie. For Gloucester's death,
I slew him not; but to my own disgrace
Neglected my sworn duty in that case.
For you, my noble Lord of Lancaster,
The honourable father to my foe,
Once did I lay an ambush for your life,
A trespass that doth vex my grieved soul;
But ere I last received the sacrament
I did confess it, and exactly begg'd 140
Your grace's pardon, and I hope I had it.
This is my fault: as for the rest appeal'd,
It issues from the rancour of a villain,
A recreant and most degenerate traitor:
Which in myself I boldly will defend;
And interchangeably hurl down my gage
Upon this overweening traitor's foot,
To prove myself a loyal gentleman

126 *receipt*] money received.

130 *remainder . . . account*] balance of a heavy sum owing to me.

131 *I went . . . his queen*] The speaker went in 1395 to negotiate a marriage between Richard and Isabella, daughter of Charles VI of France, which he concluded as proxy for the king next year. Queen Isabella was Richard II's second wife.

134 *my sworn duty*] apparently to protect the Duke from violence.

140 *interchangeably*] reciprocally; cf. V, ii, 98, *infra*.

Even in the best blood chamber'd in his bosom.
 In haste whereof, most heartily I pray 150
 Your highness to assign our trial day.

K. RICH. Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me;
 Let's purge this choler without letting blood:
 This we prescribe, though no physician;
 Deep malice makes too deep incision:
 Forget, forgive; conclude and be agreed;
 Our doctors say this is no month to bleed.
 Good uncle, let this end where it begun;
 We'll calm the Duke of Norfolk, you your son.

GAUNT. To be a make-peace shall become my
 age: 160

Throw down, my son, the Duke of Norfolk's gage.

K. RICH. And, Norfolk, throw down his.

GAUNT. When, Harry, when?
 Obedience bids I should not bid again.

K. RICH. Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no
 boot.

Mow. Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot.
 My life thou shalt command, but not my shame:
 The one my duty owes; but my fair name,
 Despite of death that lives upon my grave,
 To dark dishonour's use thou shalt not have.

150 *In haste whereof*] In order to hasten proof of my loyalty.

157 *this is no month to bleed*] Early almanacs noticed the best seasons for blood-letting.

162 *When . . . when?*] An exclamation of impatience, like "Now, now!"

164 *there is no boot*] there is no use (in refusal).

168 *Despite . . . grave*] That lives on my grave in spite of death, after my death: an awkward inversion of phrase.

I am disgraced, impeach'd and baffled here; 170
Pierced to the soul with slander's venom'd spear,
The which no balm can cure but his heart-blood
Which breathed this poison.

K. RICH. Rage must be withstood:
Give me his gage: lions make leopards tame.

Mow. Yea, but not change his spots: take but my
shame,

And I resign my gage. My dear dear lord,
The purest treasure mortal times afford
Is spotless reputation: that away,
Men are but gilded loam or painted clay.
A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest 180
Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast.

Mine honour is my life; both grow in one;
Take honour from me, and my life is done:
Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try;
In that I live and for that will I die.

K. RICH. Cousin, throw up your gage; do you begin.

BOLING. O, God defend my soul from such deep
sin!

Shall I seem crest-fallen in my father's sight?
Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height
Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue 190

170 *baffled*] humiliated, treated with ignominy. Cf. *Tw. Night*, V, i, 356:

"Alas, poor fool, how have they *baffled* thee!"

189 *beggar-fear*] timidity habitual to beggars. Thus the first Quarto and the First and Second Folios. The second, third, and fourth Quartos read *begger-face*, i. e., with a face of supplication.

impeach my height] question my high descent.

190 *out-dared*] defied to all extremity.

Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,
Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear
The slavish motive of recanting fear,
And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace,
Where shame doth harbour, even in Mowbray's face.

[*Exit Gaunt.*]

K. RICH. We were not born to sue, but to command;
Which since we cannot do to make you friends,
Be ready, as your lives shall answer it,
At Coventry, upon Saint Lambert's day:
There shall your swords and lances arbitrate
The swelling difference of your settled hate:
Since we can not atone you, we shall see
Justice design the victor's chivalry.
Lord marshal, command our officers at arms
Be ready to direct these home alarms.

200

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II—THE DUKE OF LANCASTER'S PALACE

Enter JOHN OF GAUNT with the DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

GAUNT. Alas, the part I had in Woodstock's blood
Doth more solicit me than your exclams,
To stir against the butchers of his life!

193 *motive*] agent, instrument; here the tongue.

202 *atone you*] cause you to be at one, reconcile you.

203 *design*] designate, declare.

1 *the part . . . Woodstock's blood*] Thus the Quartos. The Folios read *Glosters*. The speaker is referring to his blood-relationship with his brother, Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester.

2 *exclams*] outcries. Cf. *Rich. III*, I, ii, 52: "deep exclams."

But since correction lieth in those hands
Which made the fault that we cannot correct,
Put we our quarrel to the will of heaven;
Who, when they see the hours ripe on earth,
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders' heads.

DUCH. Finds brotherhood in thee no sharper spur?
Hath love in thy old blood no living fire? 10

Edward's seven sons, whereof thyself art one,
Were as seven vials of his sacred blood,
Or seven fair branches springing from one root:
Some of those seven are dried by nature's course,
Some of those branches by the Destinies cut;
But Thomas, my dear lord, my life, my Gloucester,
One vial full of Edward's sacred blood,
One flourishing branch of his most royal root,
Is crack'd, and all the precious liquor spilt,
Is hack'd down, and his summer leaves all faded, 20
By envy's hand and murder's bloody axe.

Ah, Gaunt, his blood was thine! that bed, that womb,
That metal, that self-mould, that fashion'd thee
Made him a man; and though thou livest and
breathest,

Yet art thou slain in him: thou dost consent
In some large measure to thy father's death,
In that thou seest thy wretched brother die,
Who was the model of thy father's life.
Call it not patience, Gaunt; it is despair:
In suffering thus thy brother to be slaughter'd, 30

23 *self-mould*] selfsame mould.

28 *the model . . . life*] the image of thy father when alive.

Thou showest the naked pathway to thy life,
Teaching stern murder how to butcher thee:
That which in mean men we intitle patience
Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts.
What shall I say? to safeguard thine own life,
The best way is to venge my Gloucester's death.

GAUNT. God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,
His deputy anointed in His sight,
Hath caused his death: the which if wrongfully,
Let heaven revenge; for I may never lift
An angry arm against His minister.

DUCH. Where then, alas, may I complain myself?

GAUNT. To God, the widow's champion and defence.

DUCH. Why, then, I will. Farewell, old Gaunt.
Thou goest to Coventry, there to behold
Our cousin Hereford and fell Mowbray fight:
O, sit my husband's wrongs on Hereford's spear,
That it may enter butcher Mowbray's breast!
Or, if misfortune miss the first career,
Be Mowbray's sins so heavy in his bosom,
That they may break his foaming courser's back,
And throw the rider headlong in the lists,
A caitiff recreant to my cousin Hereford!
Farewell, old Gaunt: thy sometimes brother's wife
With her companion grief must end her life.

GAUNT. Sister, farewell; I must to Coventry:
As much good stay with thee as go with me!

42 *complain myself*] make my plaint; a reflective use of "complain,"
like the French "me plaindre."

49 *career*] onset, attack.

DUCH. Yet one word more: grief boundeth where it falls,

Not with the empty hollowness, but weight:

I take my leave before I have begun,

60

For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.

Commend me to thy brother, Edmund York.

Lo, this is all: — nay, yet depart not so;

Though this be all, do not so quickly go;

I shall remember more. Bid him — ah, what? —

With all good speed at Plashy visit me.

Alack, and what shall good old York there see

But empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walls,

Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?

And what hear there for welcome but my groans?

70

Therefore commend me; let him not come there,

To seek out sorrow that dwells every where.

Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die:

The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye. [*Exeunt.*]

58-59 *grief . . . weight*] The wordiness of grief is likened to the restless boundings of a tennis-ball, despite the contrast between the "empty hollowness" of the ball and the "weight" of sorrow.

66 *Plashy*] the Duke of Gloucester's residence near Dunmow in Essex, now Pleshy.

68 *unfurnish'd walls*] bare walls, which in ordinary circumstances were covered with tapestry or hangings.

69 *offices*] the name usually bestowed on the pantry, kitchen, cellars, and servants' quarters of the house.

70 *hear*] Thus all the early editions, save some copies of the first Quarto, which read *cheere*. The words "there *see*" of line 67 make "*hear* there" in this line obviously right.

SCENE III—THE LISTS AT COVENTRY

Enter the Lord Marshal and the DUKE OF AUMERLE

MAR. My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford arm'd?

AUM. Yea, at all points; and longs to enter in.

MAR. The Duke of Norfolk, sprightly and bold,
Stays but the summons of the appellant's trumpet.

AUM. Why, then, the champions are prepared, and
stay
For nothing but his majesty's approach.

*The trumpets sound, and the KING enters with his nobles, GAUNT,
BUSHY, BAGOT, GREEN, and others. When they are set, enter
MOWBRAY in arms, defendant, with a Herald*

K. RICH. Marshal, demand of yonder champion
The cause of his arrival here in arms:

Ask him his name, and orderly proceed

To swear him in the justice of his cause. 10

MAR. In God's name and the king's, say who thou art,
And why thou comest thus knightly clad in arms;
Against what man thou comest, and what thy quarrel:
Speak truly, on thy knighthood and thy oath;
As so defend thee heaven and thy valour!

Mow. My name is Thomas Mowbray, Duke of
Norfolk;

SCENE III (stage direction). *Lord Marshal*] The office of Lord Marshal, which belonged hereditarily to the Duke of Norfolk, was filled for the occasion by Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey. Shakespeare failed to identify the Duke of Surrey as Lord Marshal, and introduces him in Act IV, Sc. i, under his own name as a new character.

Who hither come engaged by my oath —
Which God defend a knight should violate! —
Both to defend my loyalty and truth
To God, my king, and my succeeding issue, 20
Against the Duke of Hereford that appeals me;
And, by the grace of God and this mine arm,
To prove him, in defending of myself,
A traitor to my God, my king, and me:
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

*The trumpets sound. Enter BOLINGBROKE, appellant, in armour,
with a Herald*

K. RICH. Marshal, ask yonder knight in arms,
Both who he is, and why he cometh hither
Thus plated in habiliments of war;
And formally, according to our law,
Depose him in the justice of his cause. 30

MAR. What is thy name? and wherefore comest thou
hither,
Before King Richard in his royal lists?
Against whom comest thou? and what's thy quarrel?
Speak like a true knight, so defend thee heaven!

BOLING. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,
Am I; who ready here do stand in arms,
To prove, by God's grace and my body's valour,
In lists, on Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,
That he is a traitor, foul and dangerous,

18 *God defend*] God forbid.

21 *appeals*] accuses. Cf. I, i, 4, *supra*, and note.

25 *truly fight*] fight in a just cause.

30 *Depose him*] Take his deposition.

To God of heaven, King Richard and to me; . 40
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

MAR. On pain of death, no person be so bold
Or daring-hardy as to touch the lists,
Except the marshal and such officers
Appointed to direct these fair designs.

BOLING. Lord marshal, let me kiss my sovereign's
hand,

And bow my knee before his majesty:
For Mowbray and myself are like two men
That vow a long and weary pilgrimage;
Then let us take a ceremonious leave 50
And loving farewell of our several friends.

MAR. The appellant in all duty greets your highness,
And craves to kiss your hand and take his leave.

K. RICH. We will descend and fold him in our arms.
Cousin of Hereford, as thy cause is right,
So be thy fortune in this royal fight!
Farewell, my blood; which if to-day thou shed,
Lament we may, but not revenge thee dead.

BOLING. O, let no noble eye profane a tear
For me, if I be gored with Mowbray's spear: 60
As confident as is the falcon's flight
Against a bird, do I with Mowbray fight.
My loving lord, I take my leave of you;
Of you, my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle;

57 *blood*] kinsman.

64 *my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle*] The Duke of Aumerle (Aumâle or Albemarle), as elder son and heir of the Duke of York, Edward III's fifth son, was first cousin of both Bolingbroke and Richard II. The Duke of York, who figures in later scenes, is Aumerle's father.

Not sick, although I have to do with death,
But lusty, young, and cheerly drawing breath.
Lo, as at English feasts, so I regreet
The daintiest last, to make the end most sweet:
O thou, the earthly author of my blood,
Whose youthful spirit, in me regenerate, 70
Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up
To reach at victory above my head,
Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers;
And with thy blessings steel my lance's point,
That it may enter Mowbray's waxen coat,
And furbish new the name of John a Gaunt,
Even in the lusty haviour of his son.

GAUNT. God in thy good cause make thee prosperous!
Be swift like lightning in the execution;
And let thy blows, doubly redoubled, 80
Fall like amazing thunder on the casque
Of thy adverse pernicious enemy:
Rouse up thy youthful blood, be valiant and live.

BOLING. Mine innocency and Saint George to thrive!

Mow. However God or fortune cast my lot,
There lives or dies, true to King Richard's throne,
A loyal, just and upright gentleman:
Never did captive with a freer heart
Cast off his chains of bondage, and embrace

67 *regreet*] salute or welcome (cf. lines 142 and 186, *infra*).

68 *The daintiest last*] The last course (of an English feast) usually consisted of the daintiest and sweetest delicacies.

75 *waxen coat*] coat of armour penetrable as wax.

84 *to thrive*] to speed me, to help me thrive.

His golden uncontroll'd enfranchisement, 90
More than my dancing soul doth celebrate
This feast of battle with mine adversary.
Most mighty liege, and my companion peers,
Take from my mouth the wish of happy yéars:
As gentle and as jocund as to jest
Go I to fight: truth hath a quiet breast.

K. RICH. Farewell, my lord: securely I espy
Virtue with valour couched in thine eye.
Order the trial, marshal, and begin.

MAR. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby, 100
Receive thy lance; and God defend the right!

BOLING. Strong as a tower in hope, I cry amen.

MAR. Go bear this lance to Thomas, Duke of
Norfolk.

FIRST HER. Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,
Stands here for God, his sovereign and himself,
On pain to be found false and recreant,
To prove the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray,
A traitor to his God, his king and him;
And dares him to set forward to the fight.

SEC. HER. Here standeth Thomas Mowbray, Duke
of Norfolk, 110
On pain to be found false and recreant,
Both to defend himself and to approve
Henry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,
To God, his sovereign and to him disloyal;

95 *as to jest*] as to engage in sport or masquerade.

97-98 *Securely . . . couched*] "securely," i. e., "confidently," should
probably be taken as qualifying "couched."

Courageously and with a free desire
Attending but the signal to begin.

MAR. Sound, trumpets; and set forward, combatants. *[A charge sounded.]*

Stay, the king hath thrown his warder down.

K. RICH. Let them lay by their helmets and their spears,

And both return back to their chairs again: 120

Withdraw with us: and let the trumpets sound

While we return these dukes what we decree.

[A long flourish.]

Draw near,

And list what with our council we have done.

For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd

With that dear blood which it hath fostered;

And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect

Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbours' sword;

And for we think the eagle-winged pride

Of sky-aspiring and ambitious thoughts, 130

With rival-hating envy, set on you

To wake our peace, which in our country's cradle

Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep;

Which so roused up with boisterous untuned drums,

With harsh-resounding trumpets' dreadful bray,

And grating shock of wrathful iron arms,

Might from our quiet confines fright fair peace,

118 *warder*] truncheon.

122 *While we return*] Until we make answer to, inform.

129-133 *And for . . . sleep*] These five lines are omitted from all the Folios, but appear in the first four Quartos, from the second of which Pope restored them to the text.

And make us wade even in our kindred's blood;
 Therefore, we banish you our territories:
 You, cousin Hereford, upon pain of life, 140
 Till twice five summers have enrich'd our fields
 Shall not regret our fair dominions,
 But tread the stranger paths of banishment.

BOLING. Your will be done: this must my comfort be,
 That sun that warms you here shall shine on me;
 And those his golden beams to you here lent
 Shall point on me and gild my banishment.

K. RICH. Norfolk, for thee remains a heavier doom,
 Which I with some unwillingness pronounce:
 The sly slow hours shall not determinate 150
 The dateless limit of thy dear exile;
 The hopeless word of "never to return"
 Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life.

Mow. A heavy sentence, my most sovereign liege,
 And all unlook'd for from your highness' mouth:
 A dearer merit, not so deep a maim
 As to be cast forth in the common air,
 Have I deserved at your highness' hands.
 The language I have learn'd these forty years,

140 *upon pain of life*] Thus the first four Quartos. The Folios read
upon pain of death. The meaning of both phrases is the same.

All the early editions read *upon pain of life*, in line 153, *infra*.

142 *regret*] salute. Cf. line 67, *supra*, and 186, *infra*.

150 *sly slow*] stealthy and slow. Thus substantially all the early editions,
 save the Second Folio, which reads *flye slow*, i. e., "slow-flying."
 "Sly slow hours" may be compared with "thievish minutes," *All's*
Well, II, i, 165.

151 *dear*] grievous.

156 *A dearer merit*] A better reward.

My native English, now I must forgo: 160
And now my tongue's use is to me no more
Than an unstringed viol or a harp;
Or like a cunning instrument cased up,
Or, being open, put into his hands
That knows no touch to tune the harmony:
Within my mouth you have engaol'd my tongue,
Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips;
And dull unfeeling barren ignorance
Is made my gaoler to attend on me.
I am too old to fawn upon a nurse, 170
Too far in years to be a pupil now:
What is thy sentence then but speechless death,
Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?

K. RICH. It boots thee not to be compassionate:
After our sentence plaining comes too late.

Mow. Then thus I turn me from my country's light,
To dwell in solemn shades of endless night.

K. RICH. Return again, and take an oath with thee.
Lay on our royal sword your banish'd hands;
Swear by the duty that you owe to God — 180
Our part therein we banish with yourselves —
To keep the oath that we administer:
You never shall, so help you truth and God!
Embrace each other's love in banishment;
Nor never look upon each other's face;
Nor never write, regreet, nor reconcile

181 *Our part therein . . . yourselves*] The king gives up any claim to their allegiance while in exile.

186 *regreet*] salute (one another); cf. lines 67 and 142, *supra*.

This louring tempest of your home-bred hate;
Nor never by advised purpose meet
To plot, contrive, or complot any ill
'Gainst us, our state, our subjects, or our land. 190

BOLING. I swear.

Mow. And I, to keep all this.

BOLING. Norfolk, so far as to mine enemy: —
By this time, had the king permitted us,
One of our souls had wander'd in the air,
Banish'd this frail sepulchre of our flesh,
As now our flesh is banish'd from this land:
Confess thy treasons ere thou fly the realm;
Since thou hast far to go, bear not along
The clogging burthen of a guilty soul. 200

Mow. No, Bolingbroke: if ever I were traitor,
My name be blotted from the book of life,
And I from heaven banish'd as from hence '
But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know';
And all too soon, I fear, the king shall rue.
Farewell, my liege. Now no way can I stray;
Save back to England, all the world's my way. [*Exit.*]

K. RICH. Uncle, even in the glasses of thine eyes
I see thy grieved heart: thy sad aspect
Hath from the number of his banish'd years 210
Pluck'd four away. [*To Boling.*] Six frozen winters spent,
Return with welcome home from banishment.

BOLING. How long a time lies in one little word!
Four lagging winters and four wanton springs
End in a word: such is the breath of kings.

193 *so far* . . . *enemy*] so far as one may speak to one's enemy.

GAUNT. I thank my liege, that in regard of me
 He shortens four years of my son's exile:
 But little vantage shall I reap thereby;
 For, ere the six years that he hath to spend
 Can change their moons and bring their times about, 220
 My oil-dried lamp and time-bewasted light
 Shall be extinct with age and endless night;
 My inch of taper will be burnt and done,
 And blindfold death not let me see my son.

K. RICH. Why, uncle, thou hast many years to live.

GAUNT. But not a minute, king, that thou canst give:
 Shorten my days thou canst with sullen sorrow,
 And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;
 Thou canst help time to furrow me with age,
 But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage; 230
 Thy word is current with him for my death,
 But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.

K. RICH. Thy son is banish'd upon good advice,
 Whereto thy tongue a party-verdict gave:
 Why at our justice seem'st thou then to lour?

GAUNT. Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour.
 You urged me as a judge; but I had rather
 You would have bid me argue like a father.
 O, had it been a stranger, not my child,
 To smooth his fault I should have been more mild: 240

231 *Thy word . . . death*] Thy word has validity with Time, who will accept it as an order for my death.

234 *a party-verdict gave*] was a party to the judgment just now pronounced.

239-242 *O, had . . . destroy'd*] These lines appear only in the first four

Quartos. They are omitted from the Folios.

A partial slander sought I to avoid,
And in the sentence my own life destroy'd.
Alas, I look'd when some of you should say,
I was too strict to make mine own away;
But you gave leave to my unwilling tongue
Against my will to do myself this wrong.

K. RICH. Cousin, farewell; and, uncle, bid him so:
Six years we banish him, and he shall go.

[Flourish. Exeunt King Richard and train.]

AUM. Cousin, farewell: what presence must not
know,

From where you do remain let paper show. 250

MAR. My lord, no leave take I; for I will ride,
As far as land will let me, by your side.

GAUNT. O, to what purpose dost thou hoard thy
words,

That thou return'st no greeting to thy friends?

BOLING. I have too few to take my leave of you,
When the tongue's office should be prodigal
To breathe the abundant dolour of the heart.

GAUNT. Thy grief is but thy absence for a time.

BOLING. Joy absent, grief is present for that time.

GAUNT. What is six winters? they are quickly
gone. 260

BOLING. To men in joy; but grief makes one hour
ten.

GAUNT. Call it a travel that thou takest for pleasure.

241 *A partial slander*] A reproach of partiality.

249 *presence*] king's majesty. The same word is used in line 289, *infra*,
for the royal presence-chamber.

BOLING. My heart will sigh when I miscall it so,
Which finds it an inforced pilgrimage.

GAUNT. The sullen passage of thy weary steps
Esteem as foil wherein thou art to set
The precious jewel of thy home return.

BOLING. Nay, rather, every tedious stride I make
Will but remember me what a deal of world
I wander from the jewels that I love. 270
Must I not serve a long apprenticeship
To foreign passages, and in the end,
Having my freedom, boast of nothing else
But that I was journeyman to grief?

GAUNT. All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.
Teach thy necessity to reason thus;
There is no virtue like necessity.
Think not the king did banish thee,
But thou the king. Woe doth the heavier sit, 280
Where it perceives it is but faintly borne.
Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour
And not the king exiled thee; or suppose

266 *foil*] the setting which sets off a jewel.

268-293 *Nay, rather . . . light*] These lines appear only in the first four Quartos. They are omitted from the Folios.

272 *foreign passages*] foreign travel.

273-274 *Having . . . grief*] Having 'gained my freedom (after apprenticeship), I must boast of no employment but that of a journeyman in the service of grief. The metaphor is somewhat confused. The apprentice who wins his freedom becomes a "master," not a "journeyman." But Shakespeare cannot resist the quibble implied in the word "journey."

Devouring pestilence hangs in our air
 And thou art flying to a fresher clime:
 Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it
 To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou comest:
 Suppose the singing birds musicians,
 The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,
 The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more 290
 Than a delightful measure or a dance;
 For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite
 The man that mocks at it and sets it light.

BOLING. O, who can hold a fire in his hand
 By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?
 Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
 By bare imagination of a feast?
 Or wallow naked in December snow
 By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?
 O, no! the apprehension of the good 300
 Gives but the greater feeling to the worse:
 Fell sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more
 Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.

GAUNT. Come, come, my son, I'll bring thee on thy
 way:
 Had I thy youth and cause, I would not stay.

BOLING. Then, England's ground, farewell; sweet
 soil, adieu;

289 *the presence strew'd*] the presence-chamber of the king strewn as it commonly was with rushes. Cf. line 249, *supra*.

292 *gnarling*] snarling.

299 *fantastic*] imaginary, existing only in imagination.

302 *Fell sorrow's tooth . . . rankle*] Cf. *Rich. III.*, I, iii, 291: "His venom tooth will rankle to the death."

SCENE IV KING RICHARD II

My mother, and my nurse, that bears me yet!
Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,
Though banish'd, yet a trueborn Englishman. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV — THE COURT

*Enter the KING, with BAGOT and GREEN at one door; and the
DUKE OF AUMERLE at another*

K. RICH. We did observe. Cousin Aumerle,
How far brought you high Hereford on his way?

AUM. I brought high Hereford, if you call him so,
But to the next highway, and there I left him.

K. RICH. And say, what store of parting tears were
shed?

AUM. Faith, none for me; except the north-east
wind,
Which then blew bitterly against our faces,
Awaked the sleeping rheum, and so by chance
Did grace our hollow parting with a tear.

K. RICH. What said our cousin when you parted
with him?

10

AUM. "Farewell:"
And, for my heart disdained that my tongue

1 *We did observe*] The king is here continuing a conversation with Bagot and Green which was begun before the scene opens. The subject of it — Bolingbroke's courtship of the common people — is explained in lines 23 *seq.*, *infra*.

6 *none for me*] none on my part.

8 *sleeping*] Thus the first and second Quartos. Other early editions read *sleepy*.

Should so profane the word, that taught me craft,
To counterfeit oppression of such grief,
That words seem'd buried in my sorrow's grave.
Marry, would the word "farewell" have lengthen'd
hours

And added years to his short banishment,
He should have had a volume of farewells;
But since it would not, he had none of me.

K. RICH. He is our cousin, cousin; but 't is doubt, 20
When time shall call him home from banishment,
Whether our kinsman come to see his friends.
Ourself and Bushy, Bagot here and Green
Observed his courtship to the common people;
How he did seem to dive into their hearts
With humble and familiar courtesy,
What reverence he did throw away on slaves,
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles
And patient underbearing of his fortune,
As 't were to banish their affects with him. 30
Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench;
A brace of draymen bid God speed him well
And had the tribute of his supple knee,
With "Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends;"
As were our England in reversion his,
And he our subjects' next degree in hope.

GREEN. Well, he is gone; and with him go these
thoughts.

13 *that taught me craft*] "that" embodies the effect of the preceding clause, viz.: the refusal of the speaker's tongue to profane the word "farewell."

30 *affects*] affections.

Now for the rebels which stand out in Ireland,
 Expedient manage must be made, my liege,
 Ere further leisure yield them further means 40
 For their advantage and your highness' loss.

K. RICH. We will ourself in person to this war:
 And, for our coffers, with too great a court
 And liberal largess, are grown somewhat light,
 We are inforced to farm our royal realm;
 The revenue whereof shall furnish us
 For our affairs in hand: if that come short,
 Our substitutes at home shall have blank charters;
 Whereto, when they shall know what men are rich,
 They shall subscribe them for large sums of gold 50
 And send them after to supply our wants;
 For we will make for Ireland presently.

Enter BUSHY

Bushy, what news?

BUSHY. Old John of Gaunt is grievous sick, my
 lord,
 Suddenly taken; and hath sent post haste
 To entreat your majesty to visit him.

K. RICH. Where lies he?

BUSHY. At Ely House.

39 *Expedient . . . made*] Expeditions arrangements must be made,
 rapid steps must be taken.

45 *farm . . . realm*] lease out the taxes, customs, and other revenues of
 the realm, so as to obtain ready money for pressing expenses.

48 *blank charters*] blank promissory notes extorted from rich men, with
 their signatures attached, the amount for which they were valid to
 be filled up by the exchequer officers; cf. "blanks," II, i, 250, *infra*.

KING RICHARD II

ACT I.

K. RICH. Now put it, God, in the physician's mind
To help him to his grave immediately! 60

The lining of his coffers shall make coats

To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars.

Come, gentlemen, let's all go visit him:

Pray God we may make haste, and come too late!

ALL. Amen.

[*Exeunt.*]



ACT SECOND — SCENE I

ELY HOUSE

Enter JOHN OF GAUNT sick, with the DUKE OF YORK, &c.

GAUNT



WILL THE KING COME,
that I may breathe my last
In wholesome counsel to his un-
staid youth?

YORK. Vex not yourself, nor
strive not with your breath;
For all in vain comes counsel to
his ear.

GAUNT. O, but they say the
tongues of dying men
Enforce attention like deep
harmony:

Where words are scarce, they
are seldom spent in vain,
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.
He that no more must say is listen'd more

Than they whom youth and ease have taught to
glose;

10

10 *glose*] speak flatteringly, be smooth-spoken.

More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before:

The setting sun, and music at the close,
As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,
Writ in remembrance more than things long past:
Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,
My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.

YORK. No; it is stopp'd with other flattering sounds,
As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond,
Lascivious metres, to whose venom sound
The open ear of youth doth always listen; 20
Report of fashions in proud Italy,
Whose manners still our tardy apish nation
Limps after in base imitation.

Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity —
So it be new, there's no respect how vile —

That is not quickly buzz'd into his ears?
Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,
Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard. '

Direct not him whose way himself will choose:

'Tis breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou
lose. 30

12 *close*] cadence. Cf. *Tw. Night*, I, i, 4: "it had a *dying fall*" (of a musical setting).

18 *of whose taste . . . fond*] This is Collier's emendation of a passage which is manifestly corrupt in all the early editions. Most of these read *state* for *taste*, and *found* for *fond*. The First Folio reads quite hopelessly *of his state : then there are sound*.

25 *no respect*] no matter.

28-29 *Where will . . . choose*] Where the will rebels against what the understanding approves. Do not attempt to guide him who insists on taking his own course.

GAUNT. Methinks I am a prophet new inspired
And thus expiring do foretell of him :
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,
For violent fires soon burn out themselves ;
Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short ;
He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes ;
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder :
Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.
This royal throne of kings, this sceptre'd isle, 40
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise ;
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war ;
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands ;
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England, 50
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry,
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son ;

34 *violent fires . . . themselves*] Cf. note on *All's Well*, I, i, 50.

41 *earth*] home, abode.

44 *Against infection*] As a protection against the pestilence.

52 *by their breed*] by reason of their hereditary strain (of virtue).

This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world,
Is now leased out, I die pronouncing it,
Like to a tenement or pelting farm: 60
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
With inky blots and rotten parchment bonds:
That England, that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself.
Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,
How happy then were my ensuing death!

*Enter KING RICHARD and QUEEN, AUMERLE, BUSHY, GREEN,
BAGOT, ROSS, and WILLOUGHBY*

YORK. The king is come; deal mildly with his youth;
For young hot colts being raged do rage the more. 70

QUEEN. How fares our noble uncle, Lancaster?

K. RICH. What comfort, man? how is 't with aged
Gaunt?

GAUNT. O, how that name befits my composition!
Old Gaunt indeed, and gaunt in being old:
Within me grief hath kept a tedious fast;
And who abstains from meat that is not gaunt?

60 *pelting*] paltry.

64 *inky blots*] A contemptuous expression for written papers, or legal deeds.

70 *raged*] enraged.

73 *composition*] condition.

74 *Old Gaunt . . . old*] A quibble suggestive of senile decay.

For sleeping England long time have I watch'd;
 Watching breeds leanness, leanness is all gaunt:
 The pleasure that some fathers feed upon,
 Is my strict fast; I mean, my children's looks; 80
 And therein fasting, hast thou made me gaunt:
 Gaunt am I for the grave, gaunt as a grave,
 Whose hollow womb inherits nought but bones.

K. RICH. Can sick men play so nicely with their
 names?

GAUNT. No, misery makes sport to mock itself:
 Since thou dost seek to kill my name in me,
 I mock my name, great king, to flatter thee.

K. RICH. Should dying men flatter with those that live?

GAUNT. No, no, men living flatter those that die.

K. RICH. Thou, now a-dying, say'st thou flatterest me. 90

GAUNT. O, no! thou diest, though I the sicker be.

K. RICH. I am in health, I breathe, and see thee ill.

GAUNT. 'Now, He that made me knows I see thee ill;
 Ill in myself to see, and in thee seeing ill.
 Thy death-bed is no lesser than thy land,
 Wherein thou liest in reputation sick;
 And thou, too careless patient as thou art,
 Commit'st thy anointed body to the cure

83 *inherits*] owns, contains. Cf. I, i, 85, *supra*.

84 *nicely*] fantastically.

86 *Since . . . in me*] The banishment of his son and heir means for the speaker the extinction of his name.

94 *Ill . . . ill*] Thus all the early editions. Steevens suggested the omission of the words *to see*, in order to make the line of normal length.

The meaning is: I am myself ill to look on, *i. e.*, visibly ill, and am seeing ill [*i. e.*, evil] in thee.

Of those physicians that first wounded thee:
 A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown, 100
 Whose compass is no bigger than thy head;
 And yet, incaged in so small a verge,
 The waste is no whit lesser than thy land.
 O, had thy grandsire with a prophet's eye
 Seen how his son's son should destroy his sons,
 From forth thy reach he would have laid thy shame,
 Deposing thee before thou wert possess'd,
 Which art possess'd now to depose thyself.
 Why, cousin, wert thou regent of the world,
 It were a shame to let this land by lease; 110
 But, for thy world enjoying but this land,
 Is it not more than shame to shame it so?
 Landlord of England art thou now, not king:
 Thy state of law is bonds slave to the law;
 And thou —

K. RICH. A lunatic lean-witted fool,
 Presuming on an ague's privilege,

102-103 *verge*, . . . *waste*] Both these are words of technical import; "verge" is the compass or circumference of the king's court under the Lord Steward's jurisdiction; "waste" is the destruction of houses or lands by a life tenant to the injury of the heir.

108 *possess'd*] possessed by a demon, mad. The word is used in the previous line in the ordinary sense of "come into possession."

114 *Thy state . . . law*] Thy legal state or position now being that of an ordinary landlord is subject to all ordinary restrictions or restraints of statute law. You have made yourself amenable to laws from which, if you behaved as a king, you would be exempt.

115 *And thou —*] Thus the four early Quartos. The Folios make these words part of the succeeding speech of the king.

Darest with thy frozen admonition
Make pale our cheek, chasing the royal blood
With fury from his native residence.
Now, by my seat's right royal majesty, 120
Wert thou not brother to great Edward's son,
This tongue that runs so roundly in thy head
Should run thy head from thy unreverent shoulders.

GAUNT. O, spare me not, my brother Edward's son,
For that I was his father Edward's son;
That blood already, like the pelican,
Hast thou tapp'd out and drunkenly caroused:
My brother Gloucester, plain well-meaning soul,
Whom fair befall in heaven 'mongst happy souls!
May be a precedent and witness good 130
That thou respect'st not spilling Edward's blood:
Join with the present sickness that I have;
And thy unkindness be like crooked age,
To crop at once a too long wither'd flower.
Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee!
These words hereafter thy tormentors be!
Convey me to my bed, then to my grave:
Love they to live that love and honour have.

[*Exit, borne off by his Attendants.*]

121 *brother to great Edward's son*] brother to Edward the Black Prince (Richard II's father), who was eldest son of "great" Edward III.

122 *roundly*] bluntly, freely.

126 *like the pelican*] The pelican was commonly assumed to feed on blood sucked from its mother's breast.

133 *crooked*] a common epithet of "age" in Elizabethan poetry. The expression "crooked age" means "the last extremity of age."

138 *Love they to live*] Let them care to live.

K. RICH. And let them die that age and sullens have;
For both hast thou, and both become the grave. 140

YORK. I do beseech your majesty, impute his words
To wayward sickliness and age in him:
He loves you, on my life, and holds you dear
As Harry Duke of Hereford, were he here.

K. RICH. Right, you say true: as Hereford's love, so
his;
As theirs, so mine; and all be as it is.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND

NORTH. My liege, old Gaunt commends him to your
majesty.

K. RICH. What says he?

NORTH. Nay, nothing; all is said:
His tongue is now a stringless instrument;
Words, life and all, old Lancaster hath spent. 150

YORK. Be York the next that must be bankrupt so!
Though death be poor, it ends a mortal woe.

K. RICH. The ripest fruit first falls, and so doth he;
His time is spent, our pilgrimage must be.
So much for that. Now for our Irish wars:
We must supplant those rough rug-headed kerns,
Which live like venom where no venom else

139 *sullens*] fits of moroseness.

145 *as Hereford's love*] *sc.* for the king; an ironical misinterpretation of
York's somewhat ambiguous suggestion that Gaunt loves the king as
dearly as his own son.

156 *rug-headed kerns*] shock-haired, light-armed Irish foot-soldiers.

157 *no venom else*] No venomous reptiles were supposed to live in Ireland.

But only they have privilege to live.
And for these great affairs do ask some charge,
Towards our assistance we do seize to us 160
The plate, coin, revenues and moveables,
Whereof our uncle Gaunt did stand possess'd.

YORK. How long shall I be patient? ah, how long
Shall tender duty make me suffer wrong?
Not Gloucester's death, nor Hereford's banishment,
Not Gaunt's rebukes, nor England's private wrongs,
Nor the prevention of poor Bolingbroke
About his marriage, nor my own disgrace,
Have ever made me sour my patient cheek,
Or bend one wrinkle on my sovereign's face. 170
I am the last of noble Edward's sons,
Of whom thy father, Prince of Wales, was first:
In war was never lion rag'd more fierce,
In peace was never gentle lamb more mild,
Than was that young and princely gentleman.
His face thou hast, for even so look'd he,
Accomplish'd with the number of thy hours;
But when he frow'd, it was against the French
And not against his friends; his noble hand
Did win what he did spend, and spent not that 180
Which his triumphant father's hand had won;
His hands were guilty of no kindred blood,

167-168 *Nor the prevention . . . marriage*] Richard, by blackening Bolingbroke's character, caused the rejection of his suit, while in exile, to Marie, daughter of the Duke of Berry, first cousin of Charles VI, King of France.

177 *Accomplish'd . . . hours*] When he had reached the same age as thou.

But bloody with the enemies of his kin.
 O Richard! York is too far gone with grief,
 Or else he never would compare between.

K. RICH. Why, uncle, what's the matter?

YORK.

O my liege,

Pardon me, if you please; if not, I, pleased
 Not to be pardon'd, am content withal.
 Seek you to seize and gripe into your hands
 The royalties and rights of banish'd Hereford? 190
 Is not Gaunt dead, and doth not Hereford live?
 Was not Gaunt just, and is not Harry true?
 Did not the one deserve to have an heir?
 Is not his heir a well-deserving son?
 Take Hereford's rights away, and take from time
 His charters and his customary rights;
 Let not to-morrow then ensue to-day;
 Be not thyself; for how art thou a king
 But by fair sequence and succession?
 Now, afore God — God forbid I say true! — 200
 If you do wrongfully seize Hereford's rights,
 Call in the letters patents that he hath
 By his attorneys-general to sue
 His livery, and deny his offer'd homage,

185 *compare between*] make such a comparison between (Richard and his father).

190 *royalties*] feudal revenues. Cf. II, iii, 120, and III, iii, 113, *infra*.

203-204 *By his . . . homage*] A feudal tenant of full age was entitled to a writ of "livery," or "delivery," the grant of which constituted him full owner of his estate, independent of royal control, while the king accepted on that understanding the tenant's homage. "Attorneys-general" here refers to Bolingbroke's legal representatives, who had

You pluck a thousand dangers on your head,
 You lose a thousand well-disposed hearts,
 And prick my tender patience to those thoughts
 Which honour and allegiance cannot think.

K. RICH. Think what you will, we seize into our
 hands

His plate, his goods, his money and his lands. 210

YORK. I'll not be by the while: my liege, farewell:
 What will ensue hereof, there's none can tell;
 But by bad courses may be understood
 That their events can never fall out good. [Exit.

K. RICH. Go, Bushy, to the Earl of Wiltshire straight:
 Bid him repair to us to Ely House
 To see this business. To-morrow next
 We will for Ireland; and 't is time, I trow:
 And we create, in absence of ourself,
 Our uncle York lord governor of England; 220
 For he is just and always loved us well.
 Come on, our queen: to-morrow must we part;
 Be merry, for our time of stay is short.

[Flourish. Exeunt King, Queen, Aumerle,
 Bushy, Green, and Bagot.]

NORTH. Well, lords, the Duke of Lancaster is dead.

ROSS. And living too; for now his son is duke.

WILLO. Barely in title, not in revenues.

a right to sue for and hold the writ of livery in their master's absence.
 For the king to deny or refuse a feudal tenant's offered homage was
 tantamount to ignoring his right over his property. Cf. II, iii,
 129 seq., *infra*.

213 *by bad courses may be*] in regard to bad courses it may be.

214 *events*] consequences.

NORTH. Richly in both, if justice had her right.

ROSS. My heart is great; but it must break with
silence,

Ere't be disburden'd with a liberal tongue.

NORTH. Nay, speak thy mind; and let him ne'er
speak more

230

That speaks thy words again to do thee harm!

WILLO. Tends that thou wouldst speak to the Duke
of Hereford?

If it be so, out with it boldly, man;

Quick is mine ear to hear of good towards him.

ROSS. No good at all that I can do for him;

Unless you call it good to pity him,

Bereft and gelded of his patrimony.

NORTH. Now, afore God, 't is shame such wrongs are
borne

In him a royal prince and many moe

Of noble blood in this declining land.

240

The king is not himself, but basely led

By flatterers; and what they will inform,

Merely in hate, 'gainst any of us all,

That will the king severely prosecute

'Gainst us, our lives, our children, and our heirs.

ROSS. The commons hath he pill'd with grievous taxes,

And quite lost their hearts: the nobles hath he fined

For ancient quarrels, and quite lost their hearts.

WILLO. And daily new exactions are devised,

242 *what they will inform*] whatever information or accusation they will
bring.

246 *pill'd*] pillaged, plundered.

As blanks, benevolences, and I wot not what: 250
But what, o' God's name, doth become of this?

NORTH. Wars have not wasted it, for warr'd he hath
not,

But basely yielded upon compromise
That which his noble ancestors achieved with blows:
More hath he spent in peace than they in wars.

ROSS. The Earl of Wiltshire hath the realm in farm.

WILLO. The king's grown bankrupt, like a broken man.

NORTH. Reproach and dissolution hangeth over him.

ROSS. He hath not money for these Irish wars,
His burthenous taxations notwithstanding, 260
But by the robbing of the banish'd duke.

NORTH. His noble kinsman: most degenerate king!
But, lords, we hear this fearful tempest sing,
Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm;
We see the wind sit sore upon our sails,
And yet we strike not, but securely perish.

ROSS. We see the very wreck that we must suffer;
And unavoids is the danger now,
For suffering so the causes of our wreck.

250 *blanks*] blank charters or blank cheques for amounts signed by the donors, with the amounts left blank, to be filled in by the king's officers; cf. "blank charters," I, iv, 48, *supra*.

benevolences] forced loans. The word is pronounced as a quadrisyllable.

263 *hear . . . tempest sing*] Cf. *Tempest*, II, ii, 20: "Another storm brewing; I hear it sing i' the wind."

266 *strike . . . perish*] do not strike sail, but perish through overconfidence.

268 *unavoided*] unavoidable.

NORTH. Not so; even through the hollow eyes of death
I spy life peering; but I dare not say 271
How near the tidings of our comfort is.

WILLO. Nay, let us share thy thoughts, as thou dost ours.

ROSS. Be confident to speak, Northumberland:
We three are but thyself; and, speaking so,
Thy words are but as thoughts; therefore, be bold.

NORTH. Then thus: I have from le Port Blanc, a bay
In Brittany, received intelligence
That Harry Duke of Hereford, Rainold Lord Cobham,

That late broke from the Duke of Exeter, 281
His brother, Archbishop late of Canterbury,
Sir Thomas Erpingham, Sir John Ramston,
Sir John Norbery, Sir Robert Waterton and Francis
Quint,

All these well furnish'd by the Duke of Bretagne
With eight tall ships, three thousand men of war,

276 *Thy words . . . thoughts*] Thy words spoken to us in confidence are not to be treated as things spoken, but as things unexpressed, and merely thought.

279-280 *Rainold Lord Cobham, . . .*] None of the original editions give any sign of the omission of a line here; but a comparison of this speech with the passage in Holinshed, whence it has been somewhat carelessly transcribed, shows the need for a revision of the text. According to Holinshed, Thomas, the son and heir to Richard, Earl of Arundel, had lately broken from the custody of the king's half-brother, the Duke of Exeter, and had joined in Brittany his father's brother, Archbishop Arundel of Canterbury, Bolingbroke, and the
* rest. The hiatus may be filled by the words *The son of Richard, Earl of Arundel*.

Are making hither with all due expedience
And shortly mean to touch our northern shore:
Perhaps they had ere this, but that they stay
The first departing of the king for Ireland. 290
If then we shall shake off our slavish yoke,
Imp out our drooping country's broken wing,
Redeem from broking pawn the blemish'd crown,
Wipe off the dust that hides our sceptre's gilt,
And make high majesty look like itself,
Away with me in post to Ravenspurgh;
But if you faint, as fearing to do so,
Stay and be secret, and myself will go.

ROSS. To horse, to horse! urge doubts to them that
fear.

WILLO. Hold out my horse, and I will first be there.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II — WINDSOR CASTLE

Enter QUEEN, BUSHY, and BAGOT

BUSHY. Madam, your majesty is too much sad:
You promised, when you parted with the king,
To lay aside life-harming heaviness,
And entertain a cheerful disposition.

*287 *expedience*] expedition.

292 *Imp out*] Repair, graft new feathers on.

293 *from broking pawn*] from the hands of low pawn-brokers.

296 *Ravenspurgh*] Formerly a port at the mouth of the Humber in Yorkshire, near Spurn Head; but its site has long since been washed away by encroachment of the sea.

QUEEN. To please the king I did; to please myself
 I cannot do it; yet I know no cause
 Why I should welcome such a guest as grief,
 Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest
 As my sweet Richard: yet again, methinks,
 Some unborn sorrow, ripe in fortune's womb, 10
 Is coming towards me, and my inward soul
 With nothing trembles: at some thing it grieves,
 More than with parting from my lord the king.

BUSHY. Each substance of a grief hath twenty
 shadows,
 Which shows like grief itself, but is not so;
 For sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,
 Divides one thing entire to many objects;
 Like perspectives, which, rightly gazed upon,
 Show nothing but confusion, eyed awry,
 Distinguish form: so your sweet majesty, 20
 Looking awry upon your lord's departure,
 Find shapes of grief, more than himself, to wail;
 Which, look'd on as it is, is nought but shadows
 Of what it is not. Then, thrice-gracious queen,
 More than your lord's departure weep not: more's not
 seen;

Or if it be, 't is with false sorrow's eye,
 Which for things true weeps things imaginary.

18-20 *perspectives . . . form*] The word "perspectives" is applied by Elizabethans not only to various optical instruments, — *e. g.*, telescopes, magnifying glasses, — and also (as here) to pictures or figures so constructed as to present to the direct view a distorted mass, but to an oblique glance a regularly defined shape or picture. Cf. *All's Well*, V, iii, 48 *seq.*

QUEEN. It may be so; but yet my inward soul
Persuades me it is otherwise: howe'er it be,
I cannot but be sad; so heavy sad, 30
As, though on thinking on no thought I think,
Makes me with heavy nothing faint and shrink.

BUSHY. 'T is nothing but conceit, my gracious lady.

QUEEN. 'T is nothing less: conceit is still derived
From some forefather grief; mine is not so,
For nothing hath begot my something grief;
Or something hath the nothing that I grieve:
'T is in reversion that I do possess;
But what it is, that is not yet known; what
I cannot name; 't is nameless woe, I wot. 40

Enter GREEN

GREEN. God save your majesty! and well met,
gentlemen:
I hope the king is not yet shipp'd for Ireland.

QUEEN. Why hopest thou so? 't is better hope he is;
For his designs crave haste, his haste good hope:
Then wherefore dost thou hope he is not shipp'd?

GREEN. That he, our hope, might have retired his
power,
And driven into despair an enemy's hope,

33 *conceit*] fancy.

34 *'T is nothing less*] It's anything but that.

37-38 *Or something . . . possess*] "Hath" (l. 37) means "hath begot."

Something of which she does not yet know anything causes her present aimless grief. She possesses her sorrow in reversion, because the event for which she grieves has not yet come within her knowledge.

46 *retired his power*] withdrawn his forces.

Who strongly hath set footing in this land:
The banish'd Bolingbroke repeals himself,
And with uplifted arms is safe arrived 50
At Ravenspurgh.

QUEEN. Now God in heaven forbid!

GREEN. Ah madam, 't is too true: and that is worse,
The Lord Northumberland, his son young Henry Percy,
The Lords of Ross, Beaumont, and Willoughby,
With all their powerful friends, are fled to him.

BUSHY. Why have you not proclaim'd Northumber-
land

And all the rest revolted faction traitors?

GREEN. We have: whereupon the Earl of Worcester
Hath broke his staff, resign'd his stewardship,
And all the household servants fled with him 60
To Bolingbroke.

QUEEN. So, Green, thou art the midwife to my woe,
And Bolingbroke my sorrow's dismal heir:
Now hath my soul brought forth her prodigy,
And I, a gasping new-deliver'd mother,
Have woe to woe, sorrow to sorrow join'd.

BUSHY. Despair not, madam.

QUEEN. Who shall hinder me?
I will despair, and be at enmity

49 *repeals himself*] repeals his sentence, recalls himself. Cf. IV, i, 86,⁴
infra.

57 *all the rest*] Thus the first Quarto. The other early editions read *the rest of the*, which spoils the metre. "Rest" is used here adjectivally in the sense of "remaining."

59 *his staff*] his staff of office as steward of the king's household.

With cozening hope: he is a flatterer,
A parasite, a keeper back of death,
Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,
Which false hope lingers in extremity.

70

Enter YORK

GREEN. Here comes the Duke of York.

QUEEN. With signs of war about his aged neck;
O, full of careful business are his looks!
Uncle, for God's sake, speak comfortable words.

YORK. Should I do so, I should belie my thoughts:
Comfort's in heaven; and we are on the earth,
Where nothing lives but crosses, cares and grief.
Your husband, he is gone to save far off,
Whilst others come to make him lose at home:
Here am I left to underprop his land,
Who, weak with age, cannot support myself:
Now comes the sick hour that his surfeit made;
Now shall he try his friends that flatter'd him.

80

Enter a Servant

SERV. My lord, your son was gone before I came.

YORK. He was? Why, so! go all which way it will!
The nobles they are fled, the commons they are cold,
And will, I fear, revolt on Hereford's side.

72 *lingers in extremity*] causes to linger, prolongs, in extreme distress.

74 *signs of war*] armour.

77 *Should . . . thoughts*] This line is found in the first four Quartos, but is omitted from the Folios.

Sirrah, get thee to Plashy, to my sister Gloucester; 90
Bid her send me presently a thousand pound:
Hold, take my ring.

SERV. My lord, I had forgot to tell your lordship,
To-day, as I came by, I called there;
But I shall grieve you to report the rest.

YORK. What is 't, knave?

SERV. An hour before I came, the duchess died.

YORK. God for his mercy! what a tide of woes
Comes rushing on this woeful land at once!
I know not what to do: I would to God, 100
So my untruth had not provoked him to it,
The king had cut off my head with my brother's.
What, are there no posts dispatch'd for Ireland?
How shall we do for money for these wars?
Come, sister, — cousin, I would say, — pray, pardon me.
Go, fellow, get thee home, provide some carts
And bring away the armour that is there. [*Exit servant.*]
Gentlemen, will you go muster men?
If I know how or which way to order these affairs
Thus thrust disorderly into my hands, 110
Never believe me. Both are my kinsmen:
The one is my sovereign, whom both my oath

101 *untruth*] disloyalty, infidelity.

102 *The king . . . brother's*] A reference to the death of York's brother, the Duke of Gloucester, who would, however, seem to have been smothered, not beheaded.

105 *Come, sister, — cousin, I would say*] York is addressing the queen his cousin. But the news of the death of his sister-in-law, the Duchess of Gloucester, is uppermost in his mind.

And duty bids defend; the other again
Is my kinsman, whom the king hath wrong'd,
Whom conscience and my kindred bids to right.
Well, somewhat we must do. Come, cousin, I'll
Dispose of you.

Gentlemen, go, muster up your men,
And meet me presently at Berkeley.
I should to Plashy too;
But time will not permit: all is uneven,
And everything is left at six and seven.

120

[*Exeunt York and Queen.*]

BUSHY. The wind sits fair for news to go to Ireland,
But none returns. For us to levy power
Proportionable to the enemy
Is all impossible.

GREEN. Besides, our nearness to the king in love
Is near the hate of those love not the king.

BAGOT. And that's the wavering commons: for their
love
Lies in their purses, and whoso empties them
By so much fills their hearts with deadly hate.

130

BUSHY. Wherein the king stands generally condemn'd.

BAGOT. If judgement lie in them, then so do we,
Because we ever have been near the king.

GREEN. Well, I will for refuge straight to Bristol
castle:
The Earl of Wiltshire is already there.

122 *at six and seven*] an early form of the common modern phrase "at
sixes and sevens."

BUSHY. Thither will I with you; for little office,
The hateful commons will perform for us,
Except like curs to tear us all to pieces.
Will you go along with us?

140

BAGOT. No; I will to Ireland to his majesty.
Farewell: if heart's presages be not vain,
We three here part that ne'er shall meet again.

BUSHY. That's as York thrives to beat back Bolingbroke.

GREEN. Alas, poor duke! the task he undertakes
Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry:
Where one on his side fights, thousands will fly.
Farewell at once, for once, for all, and ever.

BUSHY. Well, we may meet again.

BAGOT. I fear me, never.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III — WILDS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Enter BOLINGBROKE and NORTHUMBERLAND with forces

BOLING. How far is it, my lord, to Berkeley now?

NORTH. Believe me, noble lord,

I am a stranger here in Gloucestershire:
These high wild hills and rough uneven ways
Draws out our miles, and makes them wearisome;
And yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar,
Making the hard way sweet and delectable.
But I bethink me what a weary way
From Ravenspurgh to Cotswold will be found

In Ross and Willoughby, wanting your company, 10
Which, I protest, hath very much beguiled
The tediousness and process of my travel:
But theirs is sweetened with the hope to have
The present benefit which I possess;
And hope to joy is little less in joy
Than hope enjoy'd: by this the weary lords
Shall make their way seem short, as mine hath done
By sight of what I have, your noble company.

BOLING. Of much less value is my company
Than your good words. But who comes here? 20

Enter HENRY PERCY

NORTH. It is my son, young Harry Percy,
Sent from my brother Worcester, whencesoever.
Harry, how fares your uncle?

PERCY. I had thought, my lord, to have learn'd his
health of you.

NORTH. Why, is he not with the queen?

PERCY. No, my good lord; he hath forsook the court,
Broken his staff of office and dispersed
The household of the king.

NORTH. What was his reason?
He was not so resolved when last we spake together.

PERCY. Because your lordship was proclaimed traitor. 30
But he, my lord, is gone to Ravenspurgh,
To offer service to the Duke of Hereford,
And sent me over by Berkeley, to discover

15 *hope to joy*] hope of joy.

What power the Duke of York had levied there;
Then with directions to repair to Ravenspurgh.

NORTH. Have you forgot the Duke of Hereford, boy?

PERCY. No, my good lord, for that is not forgot
Which ne'er I did remember: to my knowledge,
I never in my life did look on him.

NORTH. Then learn to know him now; this is the
duke. 40

PERCY. My gracious lord, I tender you my service,
Such as it is, being tender, raw and young;
Which elder days shall ripen and confirm
To more approved service and desert.

BOLING. I thank thee, gentle Percy; and be sure
I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul remembering my good friends;
And, as my fortune ripens with thy love,
It shall be still thy true love's recompense:
My heart this covenant makes, my hand thus seals it. 40

NORTH. How far is it to Berkeley? and what stir
Keeps good old York there with his men of war?

PERCY. There stands the castle, by yon tuft of trees,
Mann'd with three hundred men, as I have heard;
And in it are the Lords of York, Berkeley, and Seymour;
None else of name and noble estimate.

Enter ROSS and WILLOUGHBY

NORTH. Here come the Lords of Ross and Wil-
loughby,
Bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste.

47 *As in a soul*] As in ownership of a soul.

BOLING. Welcome, my lords. I wot your love pursues

A banish'd traitor: all my treasury
Is yet but unfelt thanks, which more enrich'd
Shall be your love and labour's recompense. 60

ROSS. Your presence makes us rich, most noble lord.

WILLO. And far surmounts our labour to attain it.

BOLING. Evermore thanks, the exchequer of the poor;
Which, till my infant fortune comes to years,
Stands for my bounty. But who comes here?

Enter BERKELEY

NORTH. It is my Lord of Berkeley, as I guess.

BERK. My Lord of Hereford, my message is to you.

BOLING. My lord, my answer is — to Lancaster; 70
And I am come to seek that name in England;
And I must find that title in your tongue,
Before I make reply to aught you say.

BERK. Mistake me not, my lord; 't is not my meaning
To raze one title of your honour out:
To you, my lord, I come, what lord you will,
From the most gracious regent of this land,
The Duke of York, to know what pricks you on
To take advantage of the absent time
And fright our native peace with self-born arms. 80

70 *my answer is — to Lancaster*] my reply is that your message is not
addressed to my Lord of Hereford, but to the Duke of Lancaster,
which is my just title.

79 *the absent time*] the time of the king's absence.

80 *self-born arms*] armed men native-born.

Enter YORK attended

BOLING. I shall not need transport my words by
you;
Here comes his grace in person.

My noble uncle! [*Kneels.*]

YORK. Show me thy humble heart, and not thy
knee,
Whose duty is deceiveable and false.

BOLING. My gracious uncle!

YORK. Tut, tut!

Grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle:
I am no traitor's uncle; and that word "grace"
In an ungracious mouth is but profane.
Why have those banish'd and forbidden legs 90
Dared once to touch a dust of England's ground?
But then more "why?" why have they dared to march
So many miles upon her peaceful bosom,
Fighting her pale-faced villages with war
And ostentation of despised arms?
Comest thou because the anointed king is hence?
Why, foolish boy, the king is left behind,
And in my loyal bosom lies his power.
Were I but now the lord of such hot youth

87 *Grace . . . uncle*] A familiar construction in Elizabethan writers.
Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, III, v, 151: "Thank me no thankings, nor proud
me no prouds."

95 *ostentation of despised arms*] boastful display of a despicable troop of
armed men.

99 *the lord of such hot youth*] the owner of such hot youthful blood.

As when brave Gaunt, thy father, and myself 100
 Rescued the Black Prince, that young Mars of men,
 From forth the ranks of many thousand French,
 O, then how quickly should this arm of mine,
 Now prisoner to the palsy, chastise thee
 And minister correction to thy fault!

BOLING. My gracious uncle, let me know my fault:
 On what condition stands it and wherein?

YORK. Even in condition of the worst degree,
 In gross rebellion and detested treason:
 Thou art a banish'd man, and here art come 110
 Before the expiration of thy time,
 In braving arms against thy sovereign.

BOLING. As I was banish'd, I was banish'd Hereford;
 But as I come, I come for Lancaster.
 And, noble uncle, I beseech your grace
 Look on my wrongs with an indifferent eye:
 You are my father, for methinks in you
 I see old Gaunt alive; O, then, my father,
 Will you permit that I shall stand condemn'd
 A wandering vagabond; my rights and royalties 120
 Pluck'd from my arms perforce and given away
 To upstart unthrifths? Wherefore was I born?
 If that my cousin king be King of England,

107 *On what condition . . . wherein?*] Of what nature is it, and in what
 does it consist?

112 *braving arms*] defiant arms. The expression is repeated at line 143,
infra.

116 *indifferent*] impartial.

120 *royalties*] feudal revenues. Cf. II, i, 190, *supra*, and III, iii, 113, *infra*.

122 *upstart unthrifths*] vulgar spendthrifts.

It must be granted I am Duke of Lancaster.
 You have a son, Aumerle, my noble cousin;
 Had you first died, and he been thus trod down,
 He should have found his uncle Gaunt a father,
 To rouse his wrongs and chase them to the bay.
 I am denied to sue my livery here,
 And yet my letters-patents give me leave: 130
 My father's goods are all distrain'd and sold;
 And these and all are all amiss employ'd.
 What would you have me do? I am a subject,
 And I challenge law: attorneys are denied me;
 And therefore personally I lay my claim
 To my inheritance of free descent.

NORTH. The noble duke hath been too much
 abused.

ROSS. It stands your grace upon to do him right.

WILLO. Base men by his endowments are made
 great.

YORK. My lords of England, let me tell you this: 140
 I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs
 And labour'd all I could to do him right;
 But in this kind to come, in braving arms,
 Be his own carver and cut out his way,

128 *To rouse . . . bay*] To rouse from their lairs those who do him wrong
 and hunt them to the death. The expressions belong to the technical
 terminology of the chase.

129 *sue my livery*] Cf. II, i, 203, 204, *supra*, and note.

136 *free descent*] direct descent.

138 *It stands your grace upon*] It is your grace's duty, it is incumbent upon
 your grace.

143 *braving arms*] defiant arms. Cf. line 112, *supra*, and note.

To find out right with wrong, it may not be;
And you that do abet him in this kind
Cherish rebellion and are rebels all.

NORTH. The noble duke hath sworn his coming is
But for his own; and for the right of that
We all have strongly sworn to give him aid; 150
And let him ne'er see joy that breaks that oath!

YORK. Well, well, I see the issue of these arms:
I cannot mend it, I must needs confess,
Because my power is weak and all ill left:
But if I could, by Him that gave me life,
I would attach you all and make you stoop
Unto the sovereign mercy of the king;
But since I cannot, be it known to you
I do remain as neuter. So, fare you well;
Unless you please to enter in the castle 160
And there repose you for this night.

BOLING. An offer, uncle, that we will accept:
But we must win your grace to go with us
To Bristol castle, which they say is held
By Bushy, Bagot and their complices,
The caterpillars of the commonwealth,
Which I have sworn to weed and pluck away.

YORK. It may be I will go with you: but yet I'll
pause;

156 *attach*] arrest.

166 *caterpillars of the commonwealth*] voracious vermin eating up the state. The phrase was in common use in Elizabethan literature. Cf. the title of Gosson's diatribe against the theatre, 1579: "*The Schoole of Abuse*, containing a plesaunt inuectiue against Poets, Pipers, Plaiers, Jesters and such like *Caterpillers of a Commonwealth*."

For I am loath to break our country's laws.
Nor friends nor foes, to me welcome you are: 170
Things past redress are now with me past care.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV — A CAMP IN WALES

Enter SALISBURY and a Welsh Captain

CAP. My Lord of Salisbury, we have stay'd ten days,
And hardly kept our countrymen together,
And yet we hear no tidings from the king;
Therefore we will disperse ourselves: farewell.

SAL. Stay yet another day, thou trusty Welshman:
The king reposeth all his confidence in thee.

CAP. 'T is thought the king is dead; we will not stay.
The bay-trees in our country are all wither'd,
And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;
The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth, 10
And lean-look'd prophets whisper fearful change;
Rich men look sad and ruffians dance and leap,
The one in fear to lose what they enjoy,
The other to enjoy by rage and war:
These signs forerun the death or fall of kings.

171 *Things . . . care*] Cf. *Wint. Tale*, III, ii, 219-220: "What's gone
and what's past help Should be past grief."

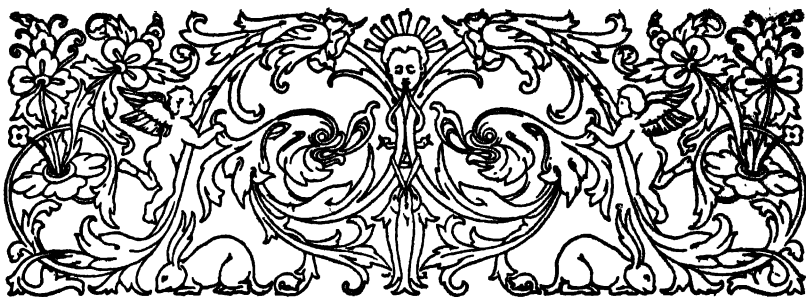
8 *The bay-trees . . . wither'd*] This detail is borrowed direct from Holin-
shed, 2d edition, 1586-1587, vol. III, p. 496.

14 *The other to enjoy*] The other in hope of enjoying.

15 *or fall*] These words appear only in the First Quarto.

Farewell: our countrymen are gone and fled,
As well assured Richard their king is dead. [Exit.

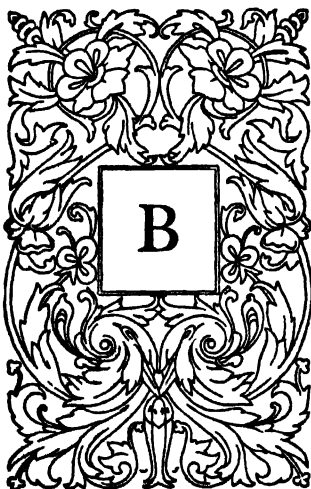
SAL. Ah, Richard, with the eyes of heavy mind
I see thy glory like a shooting star
Fall to the base earth from the firmament. 20
Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,
Witnessing storms to come, woe and unrest:
Thy friends are fled to wait upon thy foes,
And crossly to thy good all fortune goes. [Exit.



ACT THIRD — SCENE I — BRISTOL
BEFORE THE CASTLE

*Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, NORTHUMBERLAND, ROSS, PERCY,
WILLOUGHBY, with BUSHY and GREEN, prisoners*

BOLINGBROKE



BRING FORTH THESE
men.

Bushy and Green, I will not vex
your souls —

Since presently your souls must
part your bodies —

With too much urging your
pernicious lives,

For 't were no charity; yet, to
wash your blood

From off my hands, here in the
view of men

I will unfold some causes of
your deaths.

You have misled a prince, a royal king,
A happy gentleman in blood and lineaments,

3 *part*] part from, leave.

4 *too much urging*] laying too much stress on.

By you unhappied and disfigured clean : 10
 You have in manner with your sinful hours
 Made a divorce betwixt his queen and him,
 Broke the possession of a royal bed
 And stain'd the beauty of a fair queen's cheeks
 With tears drawn from her eyes by your foul wrongs;
 Myself, a prince by fortune of my birth,
 Near to the king in blood, and near in love
 Till you did make him misinterpret me,
 Have stoop'd my neck under your injuries,
 And sigh'd my English breath in foreign clouds, 20
 Eating the bitter bread of banishment;
 Whilst you have fed upon my signories,
 Dispark'd my parks and fell'd my forest woods,
 From my own windows torn my household coat,
 Razed out my imprese, leaving me no sign,
 Save men's opinions and my living blood,
 To show the world I am a gentleman.
 This and much more, much more than twice all this,
 Condemns you to the death. See them deliver'd over
 To execution and the hand of death. 30

10 *unhappied . . . clean*] made unfortunate and completely disfigured.

11 *in manner*] in a certain degree. There is no historic ground for the statement made in this passage.

23 *Dispark'd my parks*] Destroyed the fences or hedges which enclosed my parks.

24-25 *From my own windows . . . imprese*] Armorial bearings were blazoned in the stained glass windows of great houses, while the furniture and fixtures were decorated with "imprese," the technical name of heraldic devices or emblems, with mottoes attached, by which men of high birth set much store.

BUSHY. More welcome is the stroke of death¹ to
me
Than Bolingbroke to England. Lords, farewell.

GREEN. My comfort is that heaven will take our
souls
And plague injustice with the pains of hell.

BOLING. My Lord Northumberland, see them dis-
patch'd.

[Exeunt Northumberland and others, with the prisoners.]

Uncle, you say the queen is at your house;
For God's sake, fairly let her be entreated:
Tell her I send to her my kind commends;
Take special care my greetings be deliver'd.

YORK. A gentleman of mine I have dispatch'd 40
With letters of your love to her at large.

BOLING. Thanks, gentle uncle. Come, lords, away,
To fight with Glendower and his complices:
Awhile to work, and after holiday. *[Exeunt.]*

43 *To fight . . . complices*] This abrupt reference to Glendower seems due to a confused reminiscence of Holinshed's *Chronicle*. According to the chronicler, the Welsh leader was with King Richard II at Flint Castle, and was taken prisoner by Bolingbroke, although he had shown no particular sign of hostility to his captor earlier. It was not until Bolingbroke had ascended the throne as Henry IV that Glendower took up arms against him. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, i, 40, *seq.*

SCENE II—THE COAST OF WALES

A CASTLE IN VIEW

Drums: flourish and colours. Enter KING RICHARD, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE, AUMERLE, and Soldiers

K. RICH. Barkloughly castle call they this at hand?

AUM. Yea, my lord. How brooks your grace the air,
After your late tossing on the breaking seas?

K. RICH. Needs must I like it well: I weep for joy
To stand upon my kingdom once again.

Dear earth, I do salute thee with my hand,
Though rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs:

As a long-parted mother with her child
Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting,

So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth, 10

And do thee favours with my royal hands.

Feed not thy sovereign's foe, my gentle earth,
Nor with thy sweets comfort his ravenous sense;

But let thy spiders, that suck up thy venom,

And heavy-gaited toads lie in their way,

Doing annoyance to the treacherous feet

Which with usurping steps do trample thee:

Yield stinging nettles to mine enemies;

And when they from thy bosom pluck a flower,

Guard it, I pray thee, with a lurking adder, 20

Whose double tongue may with a mortal touch

¹ *Barkloughly castle*] Holinshed calls this castle "Barclowlie," which seems a misprint for "Hertlowly," the name given it by earlier authorities. "Harlech" was no doubt intended.

Throw death upon thy sovereign's enemies.
Mock not my senseless conjuration, lords:
This earth shall have a feeling and these stones
Prove armed soldiers, ere her native king
Shall falter under foul rebellion's arms.

CAR. Fear not, my lord: that Power that made you
king

Hath power to keep you king in spite of all.
The means that heaven yields must be embraced,
And not neglected; else, if heaven would, 30
And we will not, heaven's offer we refuse,
The proffer'd means of succour and redress.

AUM. He means, my lord, that we are too remiss;
Whilst Bolingbroke, through our security,
Grows strong and great in substance and in power.

K. RICH. Discomfortable cousin! know'st thou not
That when the searching eye of heaven is hid,
Behind the globe, that lights the lower world,
Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen
In murders and in outrage, boldly here; 40
But when from under this terrestrial ball
He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines
And darts his light through every guilty hole,
Then murders, treasons and detested sins,

23 *senseless conjuration*] appeal to an inanimate thing.

36 *Discomfortable*] Discouraging.

37-38 *That when . . . lower world*] Cf. *Meas. for Meas.*, IV, iii, 84-85:

"Ere twice the sun hath made his journal greeting To the *under* generation;" a reference to the Antipodes.

40 *boldly*] Collier's emendation of the First Quarto reading *bouldy*. All other early editions read (substantially) *bloody*.

The cloak of night being pluck'd from off their backs,
Stand bare and naked, trembling at themselves?
So when this thief, this traitor, Bolingbroke,
Who all this while hath revell'd in the night,
Whilst we were wandering with the antipodes,
Shall see us rising in our throne, the east, 50
His treasons will sit blushing in his face,
Not able to endure the sight of day,
But self-affrighted tremble at his sin.
Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord:
For every man that Bolingbroke hath press'd
To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,
God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay 60
A glorious angel: then, if angels fight,
Weak men must fall, for heaven still guards the right.

Enter SALISBURY

Welcome, my lord: how far off lies your power?

SAL. Nor near nor farther off, my gracious lord,
Than this weak arm: discomfort guides my tongue
And bids me speak of nothing but despair.
One day too late, I fear me, noble lord,
Hath clouded all thy happy days on earth:
O, call back yesterday, bid time return,

55 *balm*] consecrated oil used at a king's consecration. Cf. IV, i, 207,
infra.

58-59 *hath press'd . . . steel*] has induced to lift sharp, hurtful steel.

And thou shalt have twelve thousand fighting men! 70
To-day, to-day, unhappy day, too late,
O'erthrows thy joys, friends, fortune and thy state:
For all the Welshmen, hearing thou wert dead,
Are gone to Bolingbroke, dispersed and fled.

AUM. Comfort, my liege: why looks your grace so pale?

K. RICH. But now the blood of twenty thousand men
Did triumph in my face, and they are fled;
And, till so much blood thither come again,
Have I not reason to look pale and dead?
All souls that will be safe, fly from my side, 80
For time hath set a blot upon my pride.

AUM. Comfort, my liege; remember who you are.

K. RICH. I had forgot myself: am I not king?
Awake, thou coward majesty! thou sleepest.
Is not the king's name twenty thousand names?
Arm, arm, my name! a puny subject strikes
At thy great glory. Look not to the ground,
Ye favourites of a king: are we not high?
High be our thoughts: I know my uncle York
Hath power enough to serve our turn. But who comes 90
here?

Enter SCROOP

SCROOP. More health and happiness betide my liege
Than can my care-tuned tongue deliver him!

K. RICH. Mine ear is open and my heart prepared:
The worst is worldly loss thou canst unfold.
Say, is my kingdom lost? why, 't was my care;

84 *coward*] Thus the early Quartos. The Folios read *sluggard*.

And what loss is it to be rid of care?
Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?
Greater he shall not be; if he serve God,
We'll serve Him too and be his fellow so:
Revolt our subjects? that we cannot mend; 100
They break their faith to God as well as us:
Cry woe, destruction, ruin and decay;
The worst is death, and death will have his day.

SCROOP. Glad am I that your highness is so arm'd
To bear the tidings of calamity.
Like an unseasonable stormy day,
Which makes the silver rivers drown their shores,
As if the world were all dissolved to tears,
So high above its limits swells the rage
Of Bolingbroke, covering your fearful land 110
With hard bright steel and hearts harder than steel.
White-beards have arm'd their thin and hairless scalps
Against thy majesty; boys, with women's voices,
Strive to speak big and clap their female joints
In stiff unwieldy arms against thy crown:
Thy very beadsmen learn to bend their bows
Of double-fatal yew against thy state;
Yea, distaff-women manage rusty bills
Against thy seat: both young and old rebel,
And all goes worse than I have power to tell. 120

K. RICH. Too well, too well thou tell'st a tale so ill.

116 *beadsmen*] almsmen, inmates of an almshouse, whose duty it was to pray for their benefactor. Cf. "almsman," III, iii, 150, *infra*.

117 *double-fatal yew*] Not only are the leaves of the yew-tree poisonous, but from the wood such lethal weapons as bows were made.

118 *distaff-women . . . bills*] seamstresses handle rusty battleaxes.

Where is the Earl of Wiltshire? where is Bagot?
 What is become of Bushy? where is Green?
 That they have let the dangerous enemy
 Measure our confines with such peaceful steps?
 If we prevail, their heads shall pay for it:
 I warrant they have made peace with Bolingbroke.

SCROOP. Peace have they made with him indeed, my lord.

K. RICH. O villains, vipers, damn'd without redemption!

Dogs, easily won to fawn on any man! 130
 Snakes, in my heart-blood warm'd, that sting my heart!
 Three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas!
 Would they make peace? terrible hell make war
 Upon their spotted souls for this offence!

SCROOP. Sweet love, I see, changing his property,
 Turns to the sourest and most deadly hate:
 Again uncurse their souls; their peace is made
 With heads, and not with hands: those whom you curse
 Have felt the worst of death's destroying wound,
 And lie full low, graved in the hollow ground. 140

AUM. Is Bushy, Green and the Earl of Wiltshire dead?

SCROOP. Ay, all of them at Bristol lost their heads.

132 *Three Judases*] Reference has just been made by the distracted king to *four* supposed traitors, Wiltshire, Bagot, Bushy, and Green, and it seems an oversight to apply to them the numeral *three*. Bagot, however, did not suffer the same fate as the other three (see II. 140-141, *infra*). He fled to join Richard in Ireland, and was afterwards imprisoned by Bolingbroke in London; see IV, i, 1, *seq.*

135 *his property*] its quality.

AUM. Where is the duke my father with his power?

K. RICH. No matter where; of comfort no man speak:
Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs;
Make dust our paper and with rainy eyes
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.
Let's choose executors and talk of wills:
And yet not so, for what can we bequeath
Save our deposed bodies to the ground? 150
Our lands, our lives and all are Bolingbroke's,
And nothing can we call our own but death,
And that small model of the barren earth
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.
For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground
And tell sad stories of the death of kings:
How some have been deposed; some slain in war;
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;
Some poison'd by their wives; some sleeping kill'd;
All murder'd: for within the hollow crown 160
That rounds the mortal temples of a king
Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits,
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
To monarchize, be fear'd and kill with looks,
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
As if this flesh which walls about our life

153 *model*] the mound or mould of the earth which takes the shape of the body buried beneath it.

162 *antic*] buffoon. Cf. *1 Hen. VI*, IV, vii, 18: "Thou *antic death*, which laugh'st us here to scorn." In the old morality plays the clown of the piece was usually called the "antic."

166 *self and vain conceit*] vain self-conceit.

Were brass impregnable, and humour'd thus
Comes at the last and with a little pin
Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king! 170
Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood
With solemn reverence: throw away respect,
Tradition, form and ceremonious duty,
For you have but mistook me all this while:
I live with bread like you, feel want,
Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,
How can you say to me, I am a king?

CAR. My lord, wise men ne'er sit and wail their woes,
But presently prevent the ways to wail.
To fear the foe, since fear oppresseth strength, 180
Gives in your weakness strength unto your foe,
And so your follies fight against yourself.
Fear, and be slain; no worse can come to fight:
And fight and die is death destroying death;
Where fearing dying pays death servile breath.

AUM. My father hath a power; inquire of him,
And learn to make a body of a limb.

K. RICH. Thou chidest me well: proud Bolingbroke,
I come

To change blows with thee for our day of doom.
This ague fit of fear is over-blown; 190
An easy task it is to win our own.

Say, Scroop, where lies our uncle with his power?
Speak sweetly, man, although thy looks be sour.

SCROOP. Men judge by the complexion of the sky

183-*to fight*] by fighting.

185 *Where fearing dying*] Whereas to die in fear.

The state and inclination of the day:
So may you by my dull and heavy eye,
My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say.
I play the torturer, by small and small
To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken:
Your uncle York is join'd with Bolingbroke, 200
And all your northern castles yielded up,
And all your southern gentlemen in arms
Upon his party.

K. RICH. Thou hast said enough.
Beshrew thee, cousin, which didst lead me forth
[To Aumerle.]

Of that sweet way I was in to despair!
What say you now? what comfort have we now?
By heaven, I'll hate him everlastingly
That bids me be of comfort any more.
Go to Flint castle: there I'll pine away;
A king, woe's slave, shall kingly woe obey. 210
That power I have, discharge; and let them go
To ear the land that hath some hope to grow,
For I have none: let no man speak again
To alter this, for counsel is but vain.

AUM. My liege, one word.

K. RICH. He does me double wrong.
That wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue.
Discharge my followers: let them hence away,
From Richard's night to Bolingbroke's fair day.

[Exeunt.]

212 To ear] To till.

SCENE III — WALES

BEFORE FLINT CASTLE

*Enter, with drum and colours, BOLINGBROKE, YORK, NORTH-
UMBERLAND, Attendants, and forces*

BOLING. So that by this intelligence we learn
The Welshmen are dispersed; and Salisbury
Is gone to meet the king, who lately landed
With some few private friends upon this coast.

NORTH. The news is very fair and good, my lord:
Richard not far from hence hath hid his head.

YORK. It would beseem the Lord Northumberland
To say "King Richard": alack the heavy day
When such a sacred king should hide his head.

NORTH. Your grace mistakes; only to be brief, 10
Left I his title out.

YORK. The time hath been,
Would you have been so brief with him, he would
Have been so brief with you, to shorten you,
For taking so the head, your whole head's length.

BOLING. Mistake not, uncle, further than you should.

YORK. Take not, good cousin, further than you
should,
Lest you mistake the heavens are o'er our heads.

BOLING. I know it, uncle, and oppose not myself
Against their will. But who comes here?

14 *For taking so the head*] For acting with so little restraint, for taking
"undue liberties; the expression quibbles on Bolingbroke's seizure
of the crown.

Enter PERCY

Welcome, Harry: what, will not this castle yield? 20

PERCY. The castle royally is mann'd, my lord,
Against thy 'entrance.

BOLING. Royally!

Why, it contains no king?

PERCY. Yes, my good lord,
It doth contain a king; King Richard lies
Within the limits of yon lime and stone:
And with him are the Lord Aumerle, Lord Salisbury,
Sir Stephen Scroop, besides a clergyman
Of holy reverence; who, I cannot learn.

NORTH. O, belike it is the Bishop of Carlisle. 30

BOLING. Noble lords,

Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle;
Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parley
Into his ruin'd ears, and thus deliver:

Henry Bolingbroke

On both his knees doth kiss King Richard's hand
And sends allegiance and true faith of heart

To his most royal person; hither come

Even at his feet to lay my arms and power,

Provided that my banishment repeal'd 40

And lands restored again be freely granted:

If not, I'll use the advantage of my power

And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood

Rain'd from the wounds of slaughter'd Englishmen:

The which, how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke

It is, such crimson tempest should bedrench

The fresh green lap of fair King Richard's land,

My stooping duty tenderly shall show.
 Go, signify as much, while here we march
 Upon the grassy carpet of this plain. 50
 Let's march without the noise of threatening drum,
 That from this castle's tatter'd battlements
 Our fair appointments may be well perused.
 Methinks King Richard and myself should meet
 With no less terror than the elements
 Of fire and water, when their thundering shock
 At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.
 Be he the fire, I'll be the yielding water:
 The rage be his, whilst on the earth I rain
 My waters; on the earth, and not on him. 60
 March on, and mark King Richard how he looks.

Parle without, and answer within. Then a flourish. Enter on the walls, KING RICHARD, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE, AUMERLE, SCROOP, and SALISBURY

See, see, King Richard doth himself appear,
 As doth the blushing discontented sun
 From out the fiery portal of the east,
 When he perceives the envious clouds are bent
 To dim his glory and to stain the track
 Of his bright passage to the occident.

YORK. Yet looks he like a king: behold, his eye,
 As bright as is the eagle's, lightens forth

52 *tatter'd*] ragged, weather-beaten. Thus the later Quartos and the Folios. The two earliest Quartos read *tattered*, which is no uncommon form of the word. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, Ind., 35: "this worm-eaten hold of *ragged* stone," and *infra*, V, v, 21: "*ragged* prison walls."
 53 *appointments* . . . *perused*] *accoutrements* . . . marked.

Controlling majesty: alack, alack, for woe, 70
That any harm should stain so fair a show!

K. RICH. We are amazed; and thus long have we stood
To watch the fearful bending of thy knee, [To North.
Because we thought ourself thy lawful king:

And if we be, how dare thy joints forget
To pay their awful duty to our presence?

If we be not, show us the hand of God
That hath dismiss'd us from our stewardship;
For well we know, no hand of blood and bone
Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre, 80
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp.

And though you think that all, as you have done,
Have torn their souls by turning them from us,
And we are barren and bereft of friends;

Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike
Your children yet unborn and unbegot,
That lift your vassal hands against my head,
And threat the glory of my precious crown. 90

Tell Bolingbroke — for yond methinks he stands —
That every stride he makes upon my land
Is dangerous treason: he is come to open
The purple testament of bleeding war;

76 *awful duty*] reverential duty, due reverence.

83 *torn . . . us*] wounded their own souls by withdrawing them from
allegiance to us.

94 *The purple . . . war*] The blood-stained record of war. Cf. Kyd's
Jeronimo, Part I, II, ii, 87: "Then I unclasp the *purple leaves of war*."

But ere the crown he looks for live in peace,
Ten thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons
Shall ill become the flower of England's face,
Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace
To scarlet indignation, and bedew
Her pastures' grass with faithful English blood. 100

NORTH. The king of heaven forbid our lord the king
Should so with civil and uncivil arms
Be rush'd upon! Thy thrice noble cousin
Harry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss thy hand;
And by the honourable tomb he swears,
That stands upon your royal grandsire's bones,
And by the royalties of both your bloods,
Currents that spring from one most gracious head,
And by the buried hand of warlike Gaunt,
And by the worth and honour of himself, 110
Comprising all that may be sworn or said,
His coming hither hath no further scope
Than for his lineal royalties, and to beg
Enfranchisement immediate on his knees:
Which on thy royal party granted once,
His glittering arms he will commend to rust,
His barbed steeds to stables, and his heart

97 *the flower of England's face*] the flowering surface of England.

102 *with civil and uncivil arms*] with arms at once domestic (or intestine),
and rough or turbulent.

113 *lineal royalties*] hereditary (feudal) revenues. Cf. II, i, 190, and II,
iii, 120, *supra*.

114 *Enfranchisement*] Release or restitution.

115 *party*] part.

117 *barbed steeds*] barded steeds, armour-clad horses.

To faithful service of your majesty.

This swears he, as he is a prince, is just;

And, as I am a gentleman, I credit him.

120

K. RICH. Northumberland, say thus the king returns:

His noble cousin is right welcome hither;

And all the number of his fair demands

Shall be accomplish'd without contradiction:

With all the gracious utterance thou hast,

Speak to his gentle hearing kind commends.

We do debase ourselves, cousin, do we not, [*To Aumerle*.

To look so poorly and to speak so fair?

Shall we call back Northumberland, and send

Defiance to the traitor, and so die?

130

AUM. No, good my lord; let's fight with gentle words,

Till time lend friends and friends their helpful swords.

K. RICH. O God, O God! that e'er this tongue of
mine,

That laid the sentence of dread banishment

On yon proud man, should take it off again

With words of sooth! O that I were as great

As is my grief, or lesser than my name!

Or that I could forget what I have been,

Or not remember what I must be now!

Swell'st thou, proud heart? I'll give thee scope to beat,

Since foes have scope to beat both thee and me.

141

AUM. Northumberland comes back from Bolingbroke.

K. RICH. What must the king do now? must he
submit?

The king shall do it: must he be deposed?

136 *sooth*] flattery or conciliation.

The king shall be contented: must he lose
 The name of king? o' God's name, let it go:
 I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,
 My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,
 My gay apparel for an almsman's gown,
 My figured goblets for a dish of wood, *150
 My sceptre for a palmer's walking-staff,
 My subjects for a pair of carved saints,
 And my large kingdom for a little grave,
 A little little grave, an obscure grave;
 Or I'll be buried in the king's highway,
 Some way of common trade, where subjects' feet
 May hourly trample on their sovereign's head;
 For on my heart they tread now whilst I live;
 And buried once, why not upon my head?
 Aumerle, thou weep'st, my tender-hearted cousin! 160
 We'll make foul weather with despised tears;
 Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn,
 And make a dearth in this revolting land.
 Or shall we play the wantons with our woes,
 And make some pretty match with shedding tears?
 As thus, to drop them still upon one place,
 Till they have fretted us a pair of graves
 Within the earth; and, therein laid, — there lies

149 *My gay apparel . . . gown*] King Richard was famous for the extravagance of his dress. For "almsman" cf. "beadsman," III, ii, 116, *supra*.

152 *pair*] set.

156 *of common trade*] of common resort.

162 *lodge*] lay flat. The word is still in provincial use in this sense.

164 *play the wantons*] behave like children.

Two kinsmen digg'd their graves with weeping eyes.
Would not this ill do well? Well, well, I see 170
I talk but idly, and you laugh at me.
Most mighty prince, my Lord Northumberland,
What says King Bolingbroke? will his majesty
Give Richard leave to live till Richard die?
You make a leg, and Bolingbroke says ay.

NORTH. My lord, in the base court he doth attend
To speak with you; may it please you to come down.

K. RICH. Down, down I come; like glistening
Phaeton,
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.
In the base court? Base court, where kings grow base;
To come at traitors' calls and do them grace. 181
In the base court? Come down? Down, court! down,
king!

For night-owls shriek where mounting larks should sing.
[*Exeunt from above.*]

BOLING. What says his majesty?

NORTH. Sorrow and grief of heart
Makes him speak fondly, like a frantic man:
Yet he is come.

Enter KING RICHARD and his attendants below

BOLING. Stand all apart,
And show fair duty to his majesty. [He kneels down.
My gracious lord, —

175 *make a leg*] make a bow or courtesy.

176 *the base court*] the outer or lower court of a castle.

179 *Wanting the manage of*] Without skill to control.

185 *fondly . . . man*] foolishly, like a madman.

K. RICH. Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee
To make the base earth proud with kissing it: 191
Me rather had my heart might feel your love
Than my displeased eye see your courtesy.
Up, cousin, up; your heart is up, I know,
Thus high at least, although your knee be low.

BOLING. My gracious lord, I come but for mine own.

K. RICH. Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all.

BOLING. So far be mine, my most redoubted lord,
As my true service shall deserve your love.

K. RICH. Well you deserve: they well deserve to
have, 200

That know the strong'st and surest way to get.
Uncle, give me your hands: nay, dry your eyes;
Tears show their love, but want their remedies.
Cousin, I am too young to be your father,
Though you are old enough to be my heir.
What you will have, I'll give, and willing too;
For do we must what force will have us do.
Set on towards London, cousin, is it so?

BOLING. Yea, my good lord.

K. RICH. Then I must not say no.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]

195 *Thus high at least*] The king here touches his own head.

204 *too young . . . father*] Bolingbroke and King Richard were both of
precisely the same age, — thirty-three, — both having been born in
1366.

SCENE IV — LANGLEY

THE DUKE OF YORK'S GARDEN

Enter the QUEEN and two Ladies

QUEEN. What sport shall we devise here in this garden,

To drive away the heavy thought of care?

LADY. Madam, we'll play at bowls.

QUEEN. 'T will make me think the world is full of rubs,

And that my fortune runs against the bias.

LADY. Madam, we'll dance.

QUEEN. My legs can keep no measure in delight,
When my poor heart no measure keeps in grief:
Therefore, no dancing, girl; some other sport.

LADY. Madam, we'll tell tales.

10

QUEEN. Of sorrow or of joy?

LADY. Of either, madam.

QUEEN. Of neither, girl:
For if of joy, being altogether wanting,
It doth remember me the more of sorrow;

4-5 *rubs . . . bias*] technical terms in the game of bowls. A "rub" is an impediment to the progress of the bowl due to inequality of the ground. The "bias" is the weight inserted in one side of the ball in order to deflect its course from a straight direction.

7-8 *measure . . . measure*] In the first case the word is used in the sense of "a stately dance," and in the second case it means "moderation."

11 *joy*] Rowe's emendation of the original reading *griefe*.

Or if of grief, being altogether had,
It adds more sorrow to my want of joy:
For what I have I need not to repeat;
And what I want it boots not to complain.

LADY. Madam, I'll sing.

QUEEN. 'Tis well that thou hast cause;
But thou shouldst please me better, wouldst thou weep. 20

LADY. I could weep, madam, would it do you good.

QUEEN. And I could sing, would weeping do me
good,
And never borrow any tear of thee.

Enter a Gardener, and two Servants

But stay, here come the gardeners:
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.
My wretchedness unto a row of pins,
They'll talk of state; for every one doth so
Against a change; woe is forerun with woe.

[Queen and Ladies retire.]

GARD. Go, bind thou up yon dangling apricocks,
Which, like unruly children, make their sire 30
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight:
Give some supportance to the bending twigs.
Go thou, and like an executioner,
Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,
That look too lofty in our commonwealth:
All must be even in our government.

28 *Against a change; woe . . . woe*] In anticipation of a revolution.

Calamity is preceded by calamity.

29 *apricocks*] apricots.

You thus employ'd, I will go root away
The noisome weeds, which without profit suck
The soil's fertility from wholesome flowers.

SERV. Why should we in the compass of a pale 40
Keep law and form and due proportion,
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,
Is full of weeds; her fairest flowers choked up,
Her fruit-trees all unpruned, her hedges ruin'd,
Her knots disorder'd, and her wholesome herbs
Swarming with caterpillars?

GARD. Hold thy peace:
He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd spring
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf:
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter, 50
That seem'd in eating him to hold him up,
Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolingbroke;
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.

SERV. What, are they dead?

GARD. They are; and Bolingbroke
Hath seized the wasteful king. O, what pity is it
That he had not so trimm'd and dress'd his land
As we this garden! We at time of year
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit-trees,
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,
With too much riches it confound itself: 60
Had he done so to great and growing men,

40 *pale*] paling, enclosure.

46 *knots*] flower-beds of complicated pattern. Cf. *L. L. L.*, I, i, 236:

"curious-knotted garden."

They might have lived to bear and he to taste
Their fruits of duty: superfluous branches
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live:
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.

SERV. What, think you then the king shall be deposed?

GARD. Depress'd he is already, and deposed
'T is doubt he will be: letters came last night
To a dear friend of the good Duke of York's,
That tell black tidings.

70
*

QUEEN. O, I am press'd to death through want of
speaking! [Coming forward.
Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,
How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this displeasing
news?

What Eve, what serpent, hath suggested thee
To make a second fall of cursed man?
Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?
Darest thou, thou little better thing than earth,
Divine his downfal? Say, where, when, and how,
Camest thou by this ill tidings? speak, thou wretch.

80

GARD. Pardon me, madam: little joy have I
To breathe this news; yet what I say is true.
King Richard, he is in the mighty hold
Of Bolingbroke: their fortunes both are weigh'd:
In your lord's scale is nothing but himself,
And some few vanities that make him light;

72 *press'd to death*] the extreme torture to which persons accused of felony
and refusing to plead were subjected.

75 *suggested*] prompted, tempted.

But in the balance of great Bolingbroke,
Besides himself, are all the English peers,
And with that odds he weighs King Richard down.
Post you to London, and you will find it so; 90
I speak no more than every one doth know.

QUEEN. Nimble mischance, that art so light of foot,
Doth not thy embassy belong to me,
And am I last that knows it? O, thou think'st
To serve me last, that I may longest keep
Thy sorrow in my breast. Come, ladies, go,
To meet at London London's king in woe.
What, was I born to this, that my sad look
Should grace the triumph of great Bolingbroke?
Gardener, for telling me these news of woe, 100
Pray God the plants thou graft'st may never grow.

[Exeunt Queen and Ladies.]

GARD. Poor queen! so that thy state might be no
worse,

I would my skill were subject to thy curse.
Here did she fall a tear; here in this place
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace:
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,
In the remembrance of a weeping queen. *[Exeunt.]*

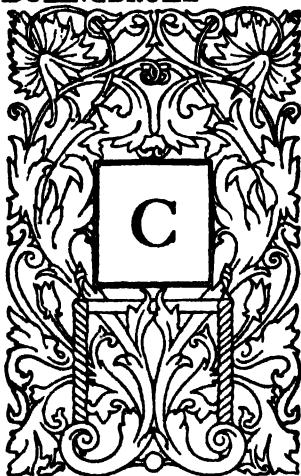
105 *herb of grace*] a popular name of the shrub rue, on which the Queen mournfully quibbles. "Grace" here means "repentance," and the verb "to rue" was common in the sense of "to repent." Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, v, 181-182: "there's rue for you; . . . we may call it *herb-grace* o' Sundays."



ACT FOURTH — SCENE I
WESTMINSTER HALL

Enter as to the Parliament, BOLINGBROKE, AUMERLE, NORTHUMBERLAND, PERCY, FITZWATER, SURREY, the BISHOP OF CARLISLE, the ABBOT OF WESTMINSTER, and another Lord, Herald, Officers, and BAGOT

BOLINGBROKE



ALL FORTH BAGOT.

Now, Bagot, freely speak thy mind;
What thou dost know of noble Gloucester's death;
Who wrought it with the king,
and who perform'd
The bloody office of his timeless end.

BAGOT. Then set before my face the Lord Aumerle.

BOLING. Cousin, stand forth,
and look upon that man.

BAGOT. My Lord Aumerle, I know your daring tongue

1 *Call forth Bagot*] Shakespeare here combines the proceedings of two Parliaments, one meeting on September 30, 1399, to decree the depo-

Scorns to unsay what once it hath deliver'd.
In that dead time when Gloucester's death was plotted, 10
I heard you say, "Is not my arm of length,
That reacheth from the restful English court
As far as Calais, to mine uncle's head?"
Amongst much other talk, that very time,
I heard you say that you had rather refuse
The offer of an hundred thousand crowns
Than Bolingbroke's return to England;
Adding withal, how blest this land would be
In this your cousin's death.

AUM. Princes and noble lords,
What answer shall I make to this base man? 20
Shall I so much dishonour my fair stars,
On equal terms to give him chastisement?
Either I must, or have mine honour soil'd
With the attainder of his slanderous lips.
There is my gage, the manual seal of death,
That marks thee out for hell: I say, thou liest,
And will maintain what thou hast said is false

sition of King Richard, and the other meeting on October 6 following, after Bolingbroke's accession to the throne. It was in the later Parliament that Bagot was brought from prison to bear witness against Aumerle. King Richard was absent from both assemblies.

4-5 *Who wrought . . . timeless end*] Who worked on the king to win his approval, and who performed the bloody office of bringing about Gloucester's untimely end.

10 *dead*] fatal.

12 *restful*] peaceful.

21 *my fair stars*] stars that attended my birth and endowed me with high rank; an astrological allusion.

25 *the manual seal of death*] the death-warrant.

In thy heart-blood, though being all too base
To stain the temper of my knightly sword.

BOLING. Bagot, forbear; thou shalt not take it up. 30

AUM. Excepting one, I would he were the best
In all this presence that hath moved me so.

FITZ. If that thy valour stand on sympathy,
There is my gage, Aumerle, in gage to thine:
By that fair sun which shows me where thou stand'st,
I heard thee say, and vauntingly thou spakest it,
That thou wert cause of noble Gloucester's death.
If thou deny'st it twenty times, thou liest;
And I will turn thy falsehood to thy heart,
Where it was forged, with my rapier's point. 40

AUM. Thou darest not, coward, live to see that day.

FITZ. Now, by my soul, I would it were this hour.

AUM. Fitzwater, thou art damn'd to hell for this.

PERCY. Aumerle, thou liest; his honour is as true
In this appeal as thou art all unjust;
And that thou art so, there I throw my gage,
To prove it on thee to the extremest point
Of mortal breathing: seize it, if thou darest.

AUM. An if I do not, may my hands rot off,
And never brandish more revengeful steel 50
Over the glittering helmet of my foe!

ANOTHER LORD. I task the earth to the like, for-
sworn Aumerle;
And spur thee on with full as many lies

33 *stand on sympathy*] depend on (your foe's) equality of rank.

52-59 *I task . . . as you*] These lines, which are omitted from the
Folios, appear in the first four Quartos.

52 *task*] Thus the first Quarto, for which the second, third, and fourth

As may be holloa'd in thy treacherous ear
 From sun to sun: there is my honour's pawn;
 Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

AUM. Who sets me else? by heaven, I'll throw at all:
 I have a thousand spirits in one breast,
 To answer twenty thousand such as you.

SURREY. My Lord Fitzwater, I do remember well 60
 The very time Aumerle and you did talk.

FITZ. 'Tis very true: you were in presence then;
 And you can witness with me this is true.

SURREY. As false, by heaven, as heaven itself is true.

FITZ. Surrey, thou liest.

SURREY. Dishonourable boy!
 That lie shall lie so heavy on my sword,
 That it shall render vengeance and revenge,
 Till thou the lie-giver and that lie do lie
 In earth as quiet as thy father's skull:
 In proof whereof, there is my honour's pawn; 70
 Engage it to the trial, if thou darest.

FITZ. How fondly dost thou spur a forward horse!
 If I dare eat, or drink, or breathe, or live,
 I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness,

in error substitute *take*. The meaning is, "I charge the earth with the like weight" (of the gage which I now throw down).

55 *From sun to sun*] From sunrise to sunset; Capell's emendation of the unintelligible Quarto reading *From sinne to sinne*.

57 *Who sets me else?*] Who else challenges me? The verb "set," *i. e.*, "set stakes," is a technical term in dice-playing.

62 *in presence*] present.

65 *boy*] used as a term of contempt. Fitzwater was thirty-one years old.

74 *in a wilderness*] all alone, in a place where no help can be had.

And spit upon him, whilst I say he lies,
And lies, and lies: there is my bond of faith,
To tie thee to my strong correction.
As I intend to thrive in this new world,
Aumerle is guilty of my true appeal:
Besides, I heard the banish'd Norfolk say,
That thou, Aumerle, didst send two of thy men
To execute the noble duke at Calais.

80

AUM. Some honest Christian trust me with a gage,
That Norfolk lies: here do I throw down this,
If he may be repeal'd, to try his honour.

BOLING. These differences shall all rest under gage
Till Norfolk be repeal'd: repeal'd he shall be,
And, though mine enemy, restored again
To all his lands and signories: when he's return'd,
Against Aumerle we will enforce his trial.

90

CAR. That honourable day shall ne'er be seen.
Many a time hath banish'd Norfolk fought
For Jesu Christ in glorious Christian field,
Streaming the ensign of the Christian cross
Against black pagans, Turks, and Saracens;
And toil'd with works of war, retired himself
To Italy; and there at Venice gave
His body to that pleasant country's earth,
And his pure soul unto his captain Christ,
Under whose colours he had fought so long.

100

78 *this new world*] the new state of affairs which Bolingbroke's reign inaugurates.

79 *true appeal*] just accusation.

85 *repeal'd*] recalled. Cf. II, ii, 49, *supra*.

BOLING. Why, bishop, is Norfolk dead ?

CAR. As surely as I live, my lord.

BOLING. Sweet peace conduct his sweet soul to the
bosom

Of good old Abraham ! Lords appellants,
Your differences shall all rest under gage
Till we assign you to your days of trial.

Enter YORK, attended

YORK. Great Duke of Lancaster, I come to thee
From plume-pluck'd Richard ; who with willing
soul

Adopts thee heir, and his high sceptre yields
To the possession of thy royal hand : 110
Ascend his throne, descending now from him ;
And long live Henry, fourth of that name !

BOLING. In God's name, I'll ascend the regal throne.

CAR. Marry, God forbid !

Worst in this royal presence may I speak,
Yet best beseeming me to speak the truth.
Would God that any in this noble presence
Were enough noble to be upright judge
Of noble Richard ! then true noblesse would
Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong. 120
What subject can give sentence on his king ?
And who sits here that is not Richard's subject ?
Thieves are not judged but they are by to hear,

116 *Yet . . . truth*] Yet it befits me best (as a servant of God) to
speak the truth.

Although apparent guilt be seen in them ;
And shall the figure of God's majesty,
His captain, steward, deputy elect,
Anointed, crowned, planted many years,
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,
And he himself not present? O, forfend it, God,
That in a Christian climate souls refined 130
Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed!
I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks,
Stirr'd up by God, thus boldly for his king.
My Lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king:
And if you crown him, let me prophesy;
The blood of English shall manure the ground,
And future ages groan for this foul act;
Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars 140
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound;
Disorder, horror, fear and mutiny
Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd
The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.
O, if you raise this house against this house,
It will the woofullest division prove
That ever fell upon this cursed earth.
Prevent it, resist it, let it not be so,
Lest child, child's children, cry against you "woe!"

NORTH. Well have you argued, sir; and, for your
pains, 150
Of capital treason we arrest you here.

My Lord of Westminster, be it your charge
 To keep him safely till his day of trial.
 May it please you, lords, to grant the commons' suit?
 BOLING. Fetch hither Richard, that in common view
 He may surrender; so we shall proceed
 Without suspicion.

YORK. I will be his conduct. [Exit.]

BOLING. Lords, you that here are under our arrest,
 Procure your sureties for your days of answer.
 Little are we beholding to your love, 160
 And little look'd for at your helping hands.

*Re-enter YORK, with RICHARD, and Officers bearing
 the regalia*

K. RICH. Alack, why am I sent for to a king,
 Before I have shook off the regal thoughts
 Wherewith I reign'd? I hardly yet have learn'd
 To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend my limbs:
 Give sorrow leave awhile to tutor me
 To this submission. Yet I well remember
 The favours of these men: were they not mine?
 Did they not sometime cry "all hail!" to me?
 So Judas did to Christ: but he, in twelve, 170
 Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none.

154-318 *May it please you . . . true king's fall*] All these lines were omitted in the first and second Quartos out of respect, it is said, for the susceptibilities of Queen Elizabeth, who disliked the presentation on the stage of the dethronement of one of her predecessors. The passage was printed for the first time in the third Quarto of 1608, and reappears in all subsequent editions.

168 *favours*] features.

God save the king! Will no man say amen?
Am I both priest and clerk? well then, amen.
God save the king! although I be not he;
And yet, amen. If heaven do think him me.
To do what service am I sent for hither?

YORK. To do that office of thine own good will
Which tired majesty did make thee offer,
The resignation of thy state and crown
To Henry Bolingbroke.

180

K. RICH. Give me the crown. Here, cousin, seize
the crown;

Here cousin;
On this side my hand, and on that side yours.
Now is this golden crown like a deep well
That owes two buckets, filling one another,
The emptier ever dancing in the air,
The other down, unseen and full of water:
That bucket down and full of tears am I,
Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.

BOLING. I thought you had been willing to resign. 180

K. RICH. My crown I am; but still my griefs are
mine:

You may my glories and my state depose,
But not my griefs; still am I king of those.

BOLING. Part of your cares you give me with your
crown.

K. RICH. Your cares set up do not pluck my cares
down.

185 *owes . . . another*] owns or possesses two buckets, filling or being filled alternately.

My care is loss of care, by old care done;
Your care is gain of care, by new care won:
The cares I give, I have, though given away;
They tend the crown, yet still with me they stay.

BOLING. 'Are you contented to resign the crown? 200

K. RICH. Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be;
Therefore no no, for I resign to thee.

Now mark me, how I will undo myself:

I give this heavy weight from off my head
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand,
The pride of kingly sway from out my heart;
With mine own tears I wash away my balm,
With mine own hands I give away my crown,
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,
With mine own breath release all duty's rites: 210

All pomp and majesty I do forswear;
My manors, rents, revenues I forgo;
My acts, decrees, and statutes I deny:
God pardon all oaths that are broke to me!
God keep all vows unbroke that swear to thee!
Make me, that nothing have, with nothing grieved,
And thou with all pleased, that hast all achieved!
Long mayst thou live in Richard's seat to sit,

196-197 *My care . . . won*] The speaker means that his grief is due to his deprivation of his old responsibilities of kingship after wearing anxieties; while Bolingbroke's trouble is due to his acquisition, at the cost of much recent energy, of royal responsibilities for the first time.

207 *my balm*] the consecrated oil used at the king's coronation. Cf. III, ii, 55, *supra*.

210 *duty's rites*] ceremonial observances which subjects owe their sovereign.

And soon lie Richard in an earthy pit!
God save King Harry, unking'd Richard says, 230
And send him many years of sunshine days!
What more remains?

NORTH. No more, but that you read
These accusations and these grievous crimes,
Committed by your person and your followers
Against the state and profit of this land;
That, by confessing them, the souls of men
May deem that you are worthily deposed.

K. RICH. Must I do so? and must I ravel out
My weaved-up folly? Gentle Northumberland, 235
If thy offences were upon record,
Would it not shame thee in so fair a troop
To read a lecture of them? If thou wouldst,
There shouldst thou find one heinous article,
Containing the deposing of a king
And cracking the strong warrant of an oath,
Mark'd with a blot, damn'd in the book of heaven:
Nay, all of you that stand and look upon,
Whilst that my wretchedness doth bait myself,
Though some of you with Pilate wash your hands,
Showing an outward pity; yet you, Pilates 240
Have here deliver'd me to my sour cross,
And water cannot wash away your sin.

NORTH. My lord, dispatch; read o'er these articles.

K. RICH. Mine eyes are full of tears, I cannot see:
And yet salt water blinds them not so much

237 *look upon*] look on as spectators.

238 *bait*] harass, torment. Cf. "bear-baiting."

But they can see a sort of traitors here.
Nay, if I turn mine eyes upon myself,
I find myself a traitor with the rest;
For I have given here my soul's consent
To undeck the pompous body of a king;
Made glory base and sovereignty a slave,
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.

250

NORTH. My lord, —

K. RICH. No lord of thine, thou haught insulting
man,

Nor no man's lord; I have no name, no title,
No, not that name was given me at the font,
But 't is usurp'd: alack the heavy day,
That I have worn so many winters out,
And know not now what name to call myself!

260

O that I were a mockery king of snow,
Standing before the sun of Bolingbroke,
To melt myself away in water-drops!
Good king, great king, and yet not greatly good,
An if my word be sterling yet in England,
Let it command a mirror hither straight,
That 't may show me what a face I have,
Since it is bankrupt of his majesty.

BOLING. Go some of you and fetch a looking-glass.

[Exit an attendant.]

NORTH. Read o'er this paper while the glass doth
come.

K. RICH. Fiend, thou torment'st me ere I come to
hell!

270

246 sort] pack or company.

BOLING. Urge it no more, my Lord Northumbreland.

NORTH. The commons will not then be satisfied.

K. RICH. They shall be satisfied: I'll read enough,
When I do see the very book indeed
Where all my sins are writ, and that's myself.

Re-enter Attendant, with a glass

Give me the glass, and therein will I read.
No deeper wrinkles yet? hath sorrow struck
So many blows upon this face of mine,
And made no deeper wounds? O flattering glass,
Like to my followers in prosperity, 280
Thou dost beguile me! Was this face the face
That every day under his household roof
Did keep ten thousand men? was this the face
That, like the sun, did make beholders wink?
Was this the face that faced so many follies,
And was at last out-faced by Bolingbroke?
A brittle glory shineth in this face:
As brittle as the glory is the face;

[Dashes the glass against the ground.]

For there it is, crack'd in a hundred shivers.
Mark, silent king, the moral of this sport, 290
How soon my sorrow hath destroy'd my face.

BOLING. The shadow of your sorrow hath destroy'd
The shadow of your face.

K. RICH. Say that again.
The shadow of my sorrow! ha! let's see:

285-286 *[faced . . . out-faced]* countenanced . . . put out of countenance.

'Tis very true, my grief lies all within;
And these external manners of laments
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief,
That swells with silence in the tortured soul;
There lies the substance: and I thank thee, king,
For thy great bounty, that not only givest 300
Me cause to wail, but teachest me the way
How to lament the cause. I'll beg one boon,
And then be gone and trouble you no more.
Shall I obtain it?

BOLING. Name it, fair cousin.

K. RICH. "Fair cousin"? I am greater than a king:
For when I was a king, my flatterers
Were then but subjects; being now a subject,
I have a king here to my flatterer.
Being so great, I have no need to beg.

BOLING. Yet ask. 310

K. RICH. And shall I have?

BOLING. You shall.

K. RICH. Then give me leave to go.

BOLING. Whither?

K. RICH. Whither you will, so I were from your
sights.

BOLING. Go, some of you convey him to the Tower.

K. RICH. O, good! convey? conveyers are you all,
That rise thus nimble by a true king's fall.

[Exeunt King Richard, some Lords, and a Guard.]

317 *convey? conveyers*] "convey" and "conveyers" were colloquial euphemisms for "steal" and "thieves." Cf. *M. Wives*, I, iii, 27, 28:

"'Convey,' the wise it call. 'Steal!' foh! a fico for the phrase!"

KING RICHARD II

ACT IV

BOLING. On Wednesday next we solemnly set down
Our coronation: lords, prepare yourselves. 320

*[Exeunt all except the Bishop of Carlisle, the
Abbot of Westminster, and Aumerle.]*

ABBOT. A woeful pageant have we here beheld.

CAR. The woe's to come; the children yet unborn
Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn.

AUM. You holy clergymen, is there no plot
To rid the realm of this pernicious blot?

ABBOT. My lord,
Before I freely speak my mind herein,
You shall not only take the sacrament
To bury mine intents, but also to effect
Whatever I shall happen to devise. 330

I see your brows are full of discontent,
Your hearts of sorrow and your eyes of tears:
Come home with me to supper; and I'll lay
A plot shall show us all a merry day.

[Exeunt.]

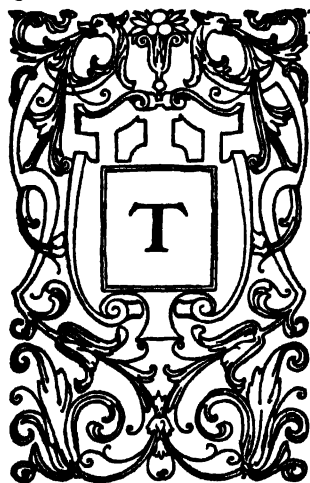
329 *bury*] conceal.



ACT FIFTH — SCENE I — LONDON
A STREET LEADING TO THE TOWER

Enter QUEEN and Ladies

QUEEN



HIS WAY THE KING WILL
come; this is the way
To Julius Cæsar's ill-erected
tower,
To whose flint bosom my con-
demned lord
Is doom'd a prisoner by proud
Bolingbroke:
Here let us rest, if this rebellious
earth
Have any resting for her true
king's queen.

Enter RICHARD and Guard

But soft, but see, or rather do not see,
My fair rose wither: yet look up, behold,

2 *Julius Cæsar's . . . tower*] The Tower of London, erected for evil purposes by Julius Cæsar. The fabulous tradition which makes

That you in pity may dissolve to dew,
 And wash him fresh again with true-love tears. 10
 Ah, thou, the model where old Troy did stand,
 Thou map of honour, thou King Richard's tomb,
 And not King Richard; thou most beauteous inn,
 Why should hard-favour'd grief be lodged in thee,
 When triumph is become an alehouse guest?

K. RICH. Join not with grief, fair woman, do not so,
 To make my end too sudden: learn, good soul,
 To think our former state a happy dream;
 From which awaked, the truth of what we are 20
 Shows us but this: I am sworn brother, sweet,
 To grim Necessity, and he and I

Julius Cæsar the builder of the Tower is expounded in fuller detail by Shakespeare in *Rich. III*, III, i, 69-74.

11 *the model . . . stand*] the mere pattern of ruined majesty. "Model" means here the pattern or ground plan. "Old Troy" typifies regal grandeur. The latter expression is suggested here by the fable that the foundations of London were laid by fugitives from Troy, who sought to reproduce their abandoned home.

12 *map of honour*] mere picture of honour in lifeless outline. Cf. *Lucrece*, 402, where sleep is called "the map of death."

13-15 *thou most . . . alehouse guest*] The image here is very far-fetched. Richard is compared to a well-ordered hostelry, Bolingbroke to a disorderly alehouse or pothouse. In the hostelry dismal or ugly sorrow finds lodging; in the pothouse triumphal joy is a welcome guest.

16-17 *Join not . . . sudden*] Do not ally yourself with sorrow (which is conquering me), and so kill me outright.

20-21 *I am sworn brother . . . Necessity*] In chivalry knights were wont, under the name of "fratres jurati," or "sworn brothers," to bind themselves by oath to share their fortunes together. Richard affirms "that he has entered into this fraternal sort of relationship with "grim Necessity," a personification of grim fate.

Will keep a league till death. Hie thee to France
And cloister thee in some religious house:
Our holy lives must win a new world's crown,
Which our profane hours here have stricken down.

QUEEN. What, is my Richard both in shape and mind
Transform'd and weaken'd? hath Bolingbroke deposed
Thine intellect? hath he been in thy heart?

The lion dying thrusteth forth his paw,
And wounds the earth, if nothing else, with rage 30
To be o'erpower'd; and wilt thou, pupil-like,
Take thy correction mildly, kiss the rod,
And fawn on rage with base humility,
Which art a lion and a king of beasts?

K. RICH. A king of beasts, indeed; if aught but
beasts,

I had been still a happy king of men.

Good sometime queen, prepare thee hence for France:
Think I am dead, and that even here thou takest,
As from my death-bed, thy last living leave.

In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire 40

With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales
Of woeful ages long ago betid;

And ere thou bid good night, to quit their griefs,
Tell thou the lamentable tale of me,

And send the hearers weeping to their beds:

For why, the senseless brands will sympathize

The heavy accent of thy moving tongue,

And in compassion weep the fire out;

43 *to quit their griefs*] by way of matching their tales of woe.

46 *sympathize*] sympathize with. The verb is here used transitively.

And some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black,^c
For the deposing of a rightful king.

50

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND and others

NORTH. My lord, the mind of Bolingbroke is
changed;

You must to Pomfret, not unto the Tower.
And, madam, there is order ta'en for you;
With all swift speed you must away to France.

K. RICH. Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal
The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne,
The time shall not be many hours of age
More than it is, ere foul sin gathering head
Shall break into corruption: thou shalt think,
Though he divide the realm, and give thee half, 60
It is too little, helping him to all;
And he shall think that thou, which know'st the way
To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,
Being ne'er so little urged, another way
To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne.
The love of wicked men converts to fear;
That fear to hate, and hate turns one or both
To worthy danger and deserved death.

NORTH. My guilt be on my head, and there an end.
Take leave and part; for you must part forthwith. 70

K. RICH. Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate
A twofold marriage; 'twixt my crown and me,
And then betwixt me and my married wife.

^c 53 *order ta'en*] arrangement made.

69 *there an end*] that is the end of the matter; there is no more to be said.

Let me un¹kiss the oath 'twixt thee and me;
And yet not so, for with a kiss 't was made.
Part us, Northumberland; I towards the north,
Where shivering cold and sickness pines the clime;
My wife to France: from whence, set forth in pomp,
She came adorned hither like sweet May,
Sent back like Hallowmas or short'st of day. 80

QUEEN. And must we be divided? must we part?

K. RICH. Ay, hand from hand, my love, and heart
from heart.

QUEEN. Banish us both and send the king with me.

NORTH. That were some love but little policy.

QUEEN. Then whither he goes, thither let me go.

K. RICH. So two, together weeping, make one woe.

Weep thou for me in France, I for thee here;

Better far off than near, be ne'er the near.

Go, count thy way with sighs; I mine with groans. 90

QUEEN. So longest way shall have the longest moans.

K. RICH. Twice for one step I'll groan, the way
being short,

And piece the way out with a heavy heart.

77 *pines the clime*] causes (the people of) the clime or country to waste away.

80 *Hallowmas . . . day*] All Hallowmas or All Souls' Day falls on November 2. It was not the shortest day of the year, though according to the calendar of Shakespeare's time, it was eleven days nearer the winter-solstice than it is now.

88 *Better . . . the near*] "The near" stands for "the nearer." The general meaning of the line is: "It is better you should be far away from me than near me; (did you remain in England) you would be never the nearer to me (in my prison)." "Never the nigher" is a common proverbial phrase, implying that a desired goal can never be reached.

Come, come, in wooing sorrow let's be brief,
Since, wedding it, there is such length in grief:
One kiss shall stop our mouths, and dumbly part;
Thus give I mine, and thus take I thy heart.

QUEEN. Give me mine own again; 't were no good
part

To take on me to keep and kill thy heart.
So, now I have mine own again, be gone,
That I may strive to kill it with a groan.

100

K. RICH. We make woe wanton with this fond delay:
Once more, adieu; the rest let sorrow say. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II — THE DUKE OF YORK'S PALACE

Enter YORK and his DUCHESS

DUCH. My lord, you told me you would tell the rest,
When weeping made you break the story off
Of our two cousins coming into London.

YORK. Where did I leave?

DUCH. At that sad stop, my lord,
Where rude misgovern'd hands from windows' tops
Threw dust and rubbish on King Richard's head.

YORK. Then, as I said, the duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery steed,
Which his aspiring rider seem'd to know,
With slow but stately pace kept on his course, 10
Whilst all tongues cried "God save thee, Bolingbroke!"
You would have thought the very windows spake,
So many greedy looks of young and old
Through casements darted their desiring eyes

Upon¹ his visage, and that all the walls
With painted imagery had said at once
"Jesu preserve thee! welcome, Bolingbroke!"
Whilst he, from the one side to the other turning,
Bareheaded, lower than his proud steed's neck,
Bespake them thus; "I thank you, countrymen:" 20
And thus still doing, thus he pass'd along.

DUCH. Alack, poor Richard! where rode he the
whilst?

YORK. As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious;
Even so, or with much more contempt, men's eyes
Did scowl on gentle Richard; no man cried "God
save him!"

No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home:
But dust was thrown upon his sacred head; 30
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off,
His face still combating with tears and smiles,
The badges of his grief and patience,
That had not God, for some strong purpose, steel'd
The hearts of men, they must perforce have melted,
And barbarism itself have pitied him.
But heaven hath a hand in these events,
To whose high will we bound our calm contents.
To Bolingbroke are we sworn subjects now,
Whose state and honour I for aye allow. 40

16 *painted imagery*] painted or embroidered tapestry or hangings, which
were commonly decorated with mottoes.

DUCH. Here comes my son Aumerle.

YORK. Aumerle that was;
But that is lost for being Richard's friend,
And, madam, you must call him Rutland now:
I am in parliament pledge for his truth
And lasting fealty to the new made king.

Enter AUMERLE

DUCH. Welcome, my son; who are the violets now
That strew the green lap of the new come spring?

AUM. Madam, I know not, nor I greatly care not:
God knows I had as lief be none as one.

YORK. Well, bear you well in this new spring of time, 50
Lest you be cropp'd before you come to prime.

What news from Oxford? hold those justs and
triumphs?

AUM. For aught I know, my lord, they do.

YORK. You will be there, I know.

AUM. If God prevent not, I purpose so.

YORK. What seal is that, that hangs without thy
bosom?

Yea, look'st thou pale? let me see the writing.

41-43 *Aumerle that was; . . . Rutland now*] According to Holinshed, the Dukes of Aumerle, Surrey, and Exeter were deprived of their Dukedoms by Henry IV's first Parliament, but were allowed to retain their respective Earldoms of Rutland, Kent, and Huntingdon.

46-47 *violets . . . spring*] the "violets" are the favourites of the new king; the "new come spring" refers figuratively to the reign which has just opened.

52 *hold those . . . triumphs?*] are these tournaments and shows to come off?

56 *What seal is that*] The seal was attached to a document by a parchment tag, and might easily slip out of the pocket.

AUM. My lord, 't is nothing.

YORK. No matter, then, who see it:
I will be satisfied; let me see the writing.

AUM. I do beseech your grace to pardon me: 60
It is a matter of small consequence,
Which for some reasons I would not have seen.

YORK. Which for some reasons, sir, I mean to see.
I fear, I fear, —

DUCH. What should you fear?
'T is nothing but some band, that he is enter'd into
For gay apparel 'gainst the triumph day.

YORK. Bound to himself! what doth he with a bond
That he is bound to? Wife, thou art a fool.
Boy, let me see the writing.

AUM. I do beseech you, pardon me; I may not
show it. 70

YORK. I will be satisfied; let me see it, I say.

[*He plucks it out of his bosom and reads it.*]
Treason! foul treason! Villain! traitor! slave!

DUCH. What is the matter, my lord?

YORK. Ho! who is within there?

Enter a Servant

Saddle my horse.

God for his mercy, what treachery is here!

DUCH. Why, what is it, my lord?

YORK. Give me my boots, I say; saddle my horse.

[*Exit Servant.*]

65 *band*] bond, obligation, surety. Thus the early Quartos. The Folios read *bond*. In the next line but one all the early editions read *bond*. See note on I, i, 2, *supra*.

Now, by mine honour, by my life, by my troth,
I will appeach the villain.

DUCH. What is the matter?

YORK. Peace, foolish woman. 80

DUCH. I will not peace. What is the matter,
Aumerle?

AUM. Good mother, be content; it is no more
Than my poor life must answer.

DUCH. Thy life answer!

YORK. Bring me my boots: I will unto the king.

Re-enter Servant with boots

DUCH. Strike him, Aumerle. Poor boy, thou art
amazed.

Hence, villain! never more come in my sight.

YORK. Give me my boots, I say.

DUCH. Why, York, what wilt thou do?

Wilt thou not hide the trespass of thine own?

Have we more sons? or are we like to have? 90

Is not my teeming date drunk up with time?

And wilt thou pluck my fair son from mine age,

And rob me of a happy mother's name?

Is he not like thee? is he not thine own?

YORK. Thou fond mad woman,

Wilt thou conceal this dark conspiracy?

A dozen of them here have ta'en the sacrament,

And interchangeably set down their hands,

To kill the king at Oxford.

79 *appeach*] impeach, bring accusation against.

85 *amused*] perplexed, bewildered.

98 *interchangeably*] by reciprocal agreement; cf. I, i, 146, *supra*.

DUCH. He shall be none;
We'll keep him here: then what is that to him? 100
YORK. Away, fond woman! were he twenty times
my son,
I would appeach him.

DUCH. Hadst thou groan'd for him
As I have done, thou wouldst be more pitiful.
But now I know thy mind; thou dost suspect
That I have been disloyal to thy bed,
And that he is a bastard, not thy son:
Sweet York, sweet husband, be not of that mind:
He is as like thee as a man may be,
Not like to me, or any of my kin,
And yet I love him.

YORK. Make way, unruly woman! [*Exit.* 110

DUCH. After, Aumerle! mount thee upon his horse;
Spur post, and get before him to the king,
And beg thy pardon ere he do accuse thee.
I'll not be long behind; though I be old,
I doubt not but to ride as fast as York:
And never will I rise up from the ground
Till Bolingbroke have pardon'd thee. Away, be gone!
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III—WINDSOR CASTLE

Enter BOLINGBROKE, PERCY, and other Lords

BOLING. Can no man tell me of my unthrifty son?
'T is full three months since I did see him last:

1 *my unthrifty son*] This is the first reference Shakespeare makes to his favourite royal hero, Prince Henry, afterwards Henry V.

If any plague hang over us, 't is he.
I would to God, my lords, he might be found:
Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,
For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,
With unrestrained loose companions,
Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,
And beat our watch, and rob our passengers;
Which he, young wanton and effeminate boy,
Takes on the point of honour to support
So dissolute a crew.

PERCY. My lord, some two days since I saw the prince,
And told him of those triumphs held at Oxford.

BOLING. And what said the gallant?

PERCY. His answer was, he would unto the stews,
And from the common'st creature pluck a glove,
And wear it as a favour; and with that
He would unhorse the lustiest challenger.

BOLING. As dissolute as desperate; yet through both 20
I see some sparks of better hope, which elder years
May happily bring forth. But who comes here?

Enter AUMERLE

AUM. Where is the king?

BOLING. What means our cousin, that he stares and
looks
So wildly?

AUM. God save your grace! I do beseech your
majesty
To have some conference with your grace alone.

11 *Takes on . . . honour*] Makes it a point of honour.

BOLING. Withdraw yourselves, and leave us here
alone. *[Exeunt Percy and Lords.]*

What is the matter with our cousin now?

AUM. For ever may my knees grow to the earth, 30
My tongue cleave to my roof within my mouth,
Unless a pardon ere I rise or speak.

BOLING. Intended or committed was this fault?
If on the first, how heinous e'er it be,
To win thy after-love I pardon thee.

AUM. Then give me leave that I may turn the key,
That no man enter till my tale be done.

BOLING. Have thy desire.

YORK. *[Within]* My liege, beware; look to thyself;
Thou hast a traitor in thy presence there. 40

BOLING. Villain, I'll make thee safe. *[Drawing.]*

AUM. Stay thy revengeful hand; thou hast no cause
to fear.

YORK. *[Within]* Open the door, secure, foolhardy
king:
Shall I for love speak treason to thy face?
Open the door, or I will break it open.

Enter YORK

BOLING. What is the matter, uncle? speak;
Recover breath; tell us how near is danger,
That we may arm us to encounter it.

34 *If on the first*] If your fault consists only in intention.

43 *secure*] over-confident.

44 *speak treason to thy face*] York speaks treason by calling Boling-
broke "foolhardy king."

YORK. Peruse this writing here, and thou shalt know
The treason that my haste forbids me show. 50

AUM. Remember, as thou read'st, thy promise pass'd:
I do repent me; read not my name there;
My heart is not confederate with my hand.

YORK. It was, villain, ere thy hand did set it down.
I tore it from the traitor's bosom, king;
Fear, and not love, begets his penitence:
Forget to pity him, lest thy pity prove
A serpent that will sting thee to the heart.

BOLING. O heinous, strong and bold conspiracy!
O loyal father of a treacherous son! 60
Thou sheer, immaculate and silver fountain,
From whence this stream through muddy passages
Hath held his current and defiled himself!
Thy overflow of good converts to bad,
And thy abundant goodness shall excuse
This deadly plot in thy digressing son.

YORK. So shall my virtue be his vice's bawd;
And he shall spend mine honour with his shame,
As thriftless sons their scraping fathers' gold.
Mine honour lives when his dishonour dies, 70
Or my shamed life in his dishonour lies:
Thou kill'st me in his life; giving him breath,
The traitor lives, the true man's put to death.

DUCH. [*Within*] What ho, my liege! for God's sake,
let me in.

61 *sheer*] pure and pellucid.

64 *Thy overflow . . . bad*] The overflow, the superfluity, of good, of virtue, in thee is turned to bad, to vice (in thy son).

66 *digressing*] transgressing, turning from the path of virtue.

BOLING. What shrill-voiced suppliant makes this
eager cry?

DUCH. A woman, and thy aunt, great king; 't is I.
Speak with me, pity me, open the door:
A beggar begs that never begg'd before.

BOLING. Our scene is alter'd from a serious thing,
And now changed to "The Beggar and the King." 80
My dangerous cousin, let your mother in:
I know she is come to pray for your foul sin.

YORK. If thou do pardon, whosoever pray,
More sins for this forgiveness prosper may.
This fester'd joint cut off, the rest rest sound;
This let alone will all the rest confound.

Enter DUCHESS

DUCH. O king, believe not this hard-hearted man!
Love loving not itself none other can.

YORK. Thou frantic woman, what dost thou make
here?

Shall thy old dugs once more a traitor rear? 90

DUCH. Sweet York, be patient. Hear me, gentle
liege. [Kneels.

BOLING. Rise up, good aunt.

DUCH. Not yet, I thee beseech:
For ever will I walk upon my knees,
And never see day that the happy sees,
Till thou give joy; until thou bid me joy,
By pardoning Rutland, my transgressing boy.

80 "The Beggar and the King"] A reference to the old popular ballad of
King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid. Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, i, 65-67.

AUM. Unto my mother's prayers I bend my knee.

[Kneels.

YORK. Against them both my true joints bended be.

[Kneels.

Ill mayst thou thrive, if thou grant any grace!

DUCH. Pleads he in earnest? look upon his face; 100

His eyes do drop no tears, his prayers are in jest;

His words come from his mouth, ours from our breast:

He prays but faintly and would be denied;

We pray with heart and soul and all beside:

His weary joints would gladly rise, I know;

Our knees shall kneel till to the ground they grow:

His prayers are full of false hypocrisy;

Ours of true zeal and deep integrity.

Our prayers do out-pray his; then let them have

That mercy which true prayer ought to have. 110

BOLING. Good aunt, stand up.

DUCH. Nay, do not say, "stand up;"

Say "pardon" first, and afterwards "stand up."

An if I were thy nurse, thy tongue to teach,

"Pardon" should be the first word of thy speech.

I never long'd to hear a word till now;

Say "pardon," king; let pity teach thee how:

The word is short, but not so short as sweet;

No word like "pardon" for kings' mouths so meet.

YORK. Speak it in French, king; say, "pardonne moi."

119 *Speak it in French . . . moi.*] York quibblingly asks the king to refuse his word of pardon. "Pardonne, or pardonnez moi," is the French mode of politely declining a request.

DUCH. Dost thou teach pardon pardon to destroy? 120
 Ah, my sour husband, my hard-hearted lord,
 That set'st the word itself against the word!
 Speak "pardon" as 't is current in our land;
 The chopping French we do not understand.
 Thine eye begins to speak, set thy tongue there:
 Or in thy piteous heart plant thou thine ear;
 That hearing how our complaints and prayers do pierce,
 Pity may move thee "pardon" to rehearse.

BOLING. Good aunt, stand up.

DUCH. I do not sue to stand;
 Pardon is all the suit I have in hand. 130

BOLING. I pardon him, as God shall pardon me.

DUCH. O happy vantage of a kneeling knee!
 Yet am I sick for fear: speak it again;
 Twice saying "pardon" doth not pardon twain,
 But makes one pardon strong.

BOLING. With all my heart
 I pardon him.

DUCH. A god on earth thou art.

BOLING. But for our trusty brother-in-law, and the
 abbot,

With all the rest of that consorted crew,

124 *chopping*] changing, ambiguous.

125 *set thy tongue there*] make thy tongue speak the pity which thine eye expresses.

137 *brother-in-law*] John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon (created Duke of Exeter in 1397), had married Henry's sister Elizabeth.
the abbot] the Abbot of Westminster.

138 *consorted*] leagued, associated. Cf. V, vi, 15, *infra*: "*consorted traitors*."

Destruction straight shall dog them at the heels.
Good uncle, help to order several powers 140
To Oxford, or where'er these traitors are:
They shall not live within this world, I swear,
But I will have them, if I once know where.
Uncle, farewell: and, cousin too, adieu:
Your mother well hath pray'd, and prove you true.
DUCH. Come, my old son: I pray God make thee
new. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV — THE SAME

Enter EXTON *and* Servant

EXTON. Didst thou not mark the king, what words he
spake,
“Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?”
Was it not so?

SER. These were his very words.

EXTON. “Have I no friend?” quoth he: he spake it
twice,
And urged it twice together, did he not?

SER. He did.

EXTON. And speaking it, he wistly look'd on me;
As who should say, “I would thou wert the man
That would divorce this terror from my heart;”
Meaning the king at Pomfret. Come, let's go: 10
I am the king's friend, and will rid his foe. [*Exeunt.*

7 *wistly*† wistfully.

11 *rid his foe*] rid him of, destroy, his foe.

SCENE V—POMFRET CASTLE

Enter KING RICHARD

K. RICH. I have been studying how I may compare
This prison where I live unto the world :
And for because the world is populous,
And here is not a creature but myself,
I cannot do it; yet I'll hammer it out.
My brain I'll prove the female to my soul,
My soul the father; and these two beget
A generation of still-breeding thoughts,
And these same thoughts people this little world,
In humours like the people of this world, 10
For no thought is contented. The better sort,
As thoughts of things divine, are intermix'd
With scruples, and do set the word itself
Against the word:
As thus, "Come, little ones," and then again,
"It is as hard to come as for a camel
To thread the postern of a small needle's eye."
Thoughts tending to ambition, they do plot
Unlikely wonders; how these vain weak nails
May tear a passage through the flinty ribs 20
Of this hard world, my ragged prison walls,

9 *this little world*] the microcosm of man, the human brain.

10 *humours*] tempers, dispositions.

13-14 *set . . . word*] set one passage of the Bible against another.

17 *postern*] back gate, narrow entrance. Cf. for the quotation *Matt. xix, 24*.

21 *ragged*] rugged, weather-beaten. Cf. "*tatter'd battlements*," III, iii, 52, and note.

And, for they cannot, die in their own pride.
Thoughts tending to content flatter themselves
That they are not the first of fortune's slaves,
Nor shall not be the last; like silly beggars
Who sitting in the stocks refuge their shame,
That many have and others must sit there;
And in this thought they find a kind of ease,
Bearing their own misfortunes on the back
Of such as have before endured the like.

30

Thus play I in one person many people,
And none contented: sometimes am I king;
Then treasons make me wish myself a beggar,
And so I am: then crushing penury
Persuades me I was better when a king;
Then am I king'd again: and by and by
Think that I am unking'd by Bolingbroke,
And straight am nothing: but whate'er I be,
Nor I nor any man that but man is
With nothing shall be pleased, till he be eased
With being nothing. Music do I hear?

40

[*Music.*]

Ha, ha! keep time: how sour sweet music is,
When time is broke and no proportion kept!
So is it in the music of men's lives.
And here have I the daintiness of ear
To check time broke in a disorder'd string;
But for the concord of my state and time

26-27 *refuge their shame, . . . sit there*] take refuge from their shame in
the thought that many have sat there and others must sit there.

31 *person*] Thus the first Quarto. All the other editions read *prison*.

46 *check*] Thus the early Quartos. The Folios read *hear*.

Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.
I wasted time, and now doth time waste me;
For now hath time made me his numbering clock: 50
My thoughts are minutes; and with sighs they jar
Their watches on unto mine eyes, the outward watch,
Whereto my finger, like a dial's point,
Is pointing still, in cleansing them from tears.
Now sir, the sound that tells what hour it is
Are clamorous groans, which strike upon my heart,
Which is the bell: so sighs and tears and groans
Show minutes, times, and hours: but my time
Runs posting on in Bolingbroke's proud joy,
While I stand fooling here, his Jack o' the clock. 60
This music mads me; let it sound no more;
For though it have holp madmen to their wits,
In me it seems it will make wise men mad.

50 *numbering clock*] clock which keeps account of the hours and minutes.

51-58 *My thoughts are minutes . . . times, and hours*] "Jar" in line 51 means "tick"; cf. *Wint. Tale*, I, ii, 48: "a jar o' the clock." "Outward watch" in line 52 is the face or dial of the clock. The whole passage is difficult. The king compares the expressions of his grief — "sighs," "tears," and "groans" — to the indications which a clock gives of the progress of time. His "sighs" correspond to the "jars" or "ticks" of the pendulum; these are counted or numbered as minutes on the dial or face, which the king likens to his eyes; from his eyes (or dial face) his finger is constantly wiping away tears with the same regularity as the dial-hand moves on a clock-face. His "groans" resemble the sound of the bell of the clock, striking the hours.

60 *Jack o' the clock*] "Jack" was a small mechanical figure of a man which struck the bell on the clock usually at each quarter of an hour.

Cf. *Rich. III*, IV, ii, 118.

63 *wise men*] men in their wits.

Yet blessing on his heart that gives it me!
 For 't is a sign of love; and love to Richard
 Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world.

Enter a Groom of the Stable

GROOM. Hail, royal prince!

K. RICH. Thanks, noble peer;
 The cheapest of us is ten groats too dear.
 What art thou? and how comest thou hither,
 Where no man never comes, but that sad dog 70
 That brings me food to make misfortune live?

GROOM. I was a poor groom of thy stable, king,
 When thou wert king; who, travelling towards York,
 With much ado at length have gotten leave
 To look upon my sometimes royal master's face.
 O, how it yearn'd my heart when I beheld
 In London streets, that coronation-day,
 When Bolingbroke rode on roan Barbary,

65 *brooch*] jewel, ornament. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, vii, 93-94: "he is the
brooch indeed And gem of all the nation."

67-68 *Hail, royal prince! . . . ten groats too dear*] A quibble on the
 words "royal" and "noble," both of which were names of gold coins.
 A "noble" was worth ten shillings, or thirty groats; a "royal" was
 worth six shillings and eight pence, or twenty groats. (A groat was
 worth four pence). The king means that he is the most insignificant
 of men. He is no longer a "royal" (coin). In any case he is
 no more than a "noble" (coin), which is worth ten groats less than a
 "royal." The same quibble occurs *1 Hen. IV*, II, iv, 318-320.

76 *yearn'd*] grieved. Thus the Fourth Folio. The four early Quartos
 read *ernd*, and the first three Folios *yern'd*. "Ern" is an old form
 of "yearn."

78 *roan Barbary*] This reference to Richard's horse is largely Shake-
 speare's invention, although Froissart tells how Richard's favourite

That horse that thou so often hast bestrid,
 That horse that I so carefully have dress'd ! 80

K. RICH. Rode he on Barbary? Tell me, gentle
 . friend,
 How went he under him?

GROOM. So proudly as if he disdain'd the ground.

K. RICH. So proud that Bolingbroke was on his back !
 That jade hath eat bread from my royal hand ;
 This hand hath made him proud with clapping him.
 Would he not stumble? would he not fall down,
 Since pride must have a fall, and break the neck
 Of that proud man that did usurp his back ?
 Forgiveness, horse ! why do I rail on thee, 90
 Since thou, created to be awed by man,
 Wast born to bear? I was not made a horse;
 And yet I bear a burthen like an ass,
 Spurr'd, gall'd and tired by jauncing Bolingbroke.

Enter Keeper, with a dish

KEEP. Fellow, give place; here is no longer stay.

K. RICH. If thou love me, 't is time thou wert away.

GROOM. What my tongue dares not, that my heart
 shall say. *[Exit.]*

KEEP. My lord, will 't please you to fall to?

greyhound, Mathe, abandoned Richard in his downfall, and fawned
 on Bolingbroke.

94 *Spurr'd, gall'd*] Thus the first and second Quartos. The Folios
 substitute *spur-gall'd*.

jauncing] prancing or causing to prance. Cf. Cotgrave, *French-Eng-
 lish Dictionary*: "Jancer un cheval. To stirre a horse in the stable
 till he be swart with all, or as our to *jaunt*, an old word."

K. RICH. Taste of it first, as thou art wont to do.

KEEP. My lord, I dare not: Sir Pierce of Exton, who lately came from the king, commands the contrary. 101

K. RICH. The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee!

Patience is stale, and I am weary of it. [*Beats the Keeper.*]

KEEP. Help, help, help!

Enter EXTON and Servants, armed

K. RICH. How now! what means death in this rude assault?

Villain, thy own hand yields thy death's instrument.

[*Snatching an axe from a Servant and killing him.*]

Go thou, and fill another room in hell.

[*He kills another. Then Exton strikes him down.*]

That hand shall burn in never-quenching fire

That staggers thus my person. Exton, thy fierce hand

Hath with the king's blood stain'd the king's own land.

Mount, mount, my soul! thy seat is up on high; 111

Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die. [*Dies.*]

EXTON. As full of valour as of royal blood:

Both have I spill'd; O would the deed were good!

For now the devil, that told me I did well,

Says that this deed is chronicled in hell.

This dead king to the living king I'll bear:

Take hence the rest, and give them burial here. [*Exeunt.*]

99 *Taste . . . wont to do*] The keeper had acted as "server" or "taster," an officer in the royal household whose duty it was to taste the food before it was served at the royal table.

SCENE VI KING RICHARD II

SCENE VI—WINDSOR CASTLE

Flourish. Enter BOLINGBROKE, YORK, with other Lords, and Attendants

BOLING. Kind uncle York, the latest news we hear
Is that the rebels have consumed with fire
Our town of Cicester in Gloucestershire;
But whether they be ta'en or slain we hear not.

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND

Welcome, my lord: what is the news?

NORTH. First, to thy sacred state wish I all happiness.

The next news is, I have to London sent
The heads of Oxford, Salisbury, Blunt, and Kent:
The manner of their taking may appear
At large discoursed in this paper here. 10

BOLING. We thank thee, gentle Percy, for thy pains;
And to thy worth will add right worthy gains.

Enter FITZWATER

FITZ. My lord, I have from Oxford sent to London
The heads of Brocas and Sir Bennet Seely,

8 *Oxford*] Thus the first Quarto, for which the Folios rightly substitute *Spencer*. Oxford was not, but Spencer was, one of the executed persons.

10 *discoursed*] described.

Two of the dangerous consorted traitors
That sought at Oxford thy dire overthrow.

BOLING. Thy pains, Fitzwater, shall not be forgot;
Right noble is thy merit, well I wot.

Enter PERCY, and the BISHOP OF CARLISLE

PERCY. The grand conspirator, Abbot of Westminster,
With clog of conscience and sour melancholy 20
Hath yielded up his body to the grave;
But here is Carlisle living, to abide
Thy kingly doom and sentence of his pride.

BOLING. Carlisle, this is your doom:
Choose out some secret place, some reverend room,
More than thou hast, and with it joy thy life;
So as thou livest in peace, die free from strife:
For though mine enemy thou hast ever been,
High sparks of honour in thee have I seen.

Enter EXTON, with persons bearing a coffin

EXTON. Great king, within this coffin I present 20
Thy buried fear: herein all breathless lies
The mightiest of thy greatest enemies,
Richard of Bordeaux, by me hither brought.

BOLING. Exton, I thank thee not; for thou hast
wrought

15 *consorted*] leagued, associated. Cf. V, iii, 138, *supra*: "*consorted crew*."

33 *Richard of Bordeaux*] Richard II was born at Bordeaux, where his father, the Black Prince, was in residence at the time.

A deed of slander, with thy fatal hand,
Upon my head and all this famous land.

EXTON. From your own mouth, my lord, did I this deed.

BOLING. They love not poison that do poison need,
Nor do I thee: though I did wish him dead,
I hate the murderer, love him murdered. 40

The guilt of conscience take thou for thy labour,
But neither my good word nor princely favour:
With Cain go wander thorough shades of night,
And never show thy head by day nor light.

Lords, I protest, my soul is full of woe,
That blood should sprinkle me to make me grow:

Come, mourn with me for that I do lament,

And put on sullen black incontinent:

I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land,

To wash this blood off from my guilty hand: 50

March sadly after; grace my mournings here;

In weeping after this untimely bier. [Exeunt.]

35 *A deed of slander*] A deed which will cause slander or scandal.

52 *weeping after*] Thus all early editions. Pope read *over* for *after*.

"After" seems to be repeated in error from the previous line.

**THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
KING JOHN**



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INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE AND DEEDS
OF KING JOHN BY RICHARD GILL

TEXT OF THE PLAN .



His eyes are out

Even with the fierce looks of these bloody men."

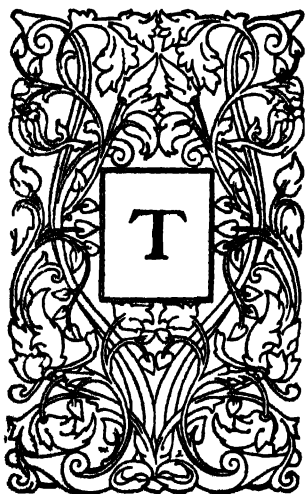
ACT IV, SCENE I, line 73.

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INTRODUCTION



THE national epic of England has been well said to be written in Shakespeare's historical plays. It was but a natural development of this thought when Schlegel pronounced the first and the last of these dramas — "King John" and "King Henry VIII" — to stand to the rest in the relation of Prologue and Epilogue. This may be accepted if the character is not attributed to them in virtue of any supposed deliberate intention on the author's part. "King Henry VIII," which is not wholly or principally Shakespeare's, is clearly an occasional piece called forth by the public joy upon the Protestant marriage of the Princess Elizabeth, for whom a Roman Catholic bridegroom had been apprehended. The undramatic subject of Henry V, of

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which Shakespeare has nevertheless made so much, was manifestly chosen to idealise Essex's expedition to Ireland in the year of its representation. When, therefore, Shakespeare wrote *King John*, in or about 1595, he can have had no prevision of a connected epic in dramatic form. "*King John*" may nevertheless be regarded as in some measure a prologue, not merely or chiefly because the action precedes that of the other plays in order of time, but because it embodies in the most concentrated form the patriotic idea by which the entire series is animated.

Not more than seven or eight of Shakespeare's plays betray a direct purpose, and whenever this purpose exists it has reference to public affairs. We have seen the drift of "*King Henry V*" and "*King Henry VIII.*" The purpose of "*King John*" is much more profound. The play is a veiled exhibition of Queen Elizabeth's conflict with the Pope and the Spaniard, and its moral is the impotence of the foreign foe but for domestic treason. The exaltation of the unpromising John as a representative of the national resistance to Romish and other foreign aggression was not a new idea. Bishop Bale, no stickler at trifles, had worked it out in Edward VI's time in a play rude for even that primitive period of dramatic art, in which John, mirror of virtue, is represented as poisoned by the monks, to prevent him from evangelising his kingdom. Shakespeare could derive nothing from Bishop Bale except amusement; but he is deeply indebted to another predecessor, the anonymous writer of "*The Troublesome Raigne of*

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King John," first printed in 1591, and probably produced a few years previously. The diction is entirely his own, but his dramatic economy is mainly his predecessor's, though the wisdom of his alterations evinces his consummate skill as an adapter. His relation to his predecessor is fully investigated in Mr. Edward Rose's excellent introduction to the facsimile reprint of "The Troublesome Raigne." His object and the old dramatist's were the same, — to inculcate loyalty, union, and stubborn resistance to the foreigner, and, as a necessary means to this end, to preserve John's inauspicious character from utter contempt.

The old play is inartistically divided into two parts. Shakespeare found it long where it ought to be short, and short where it ought to be long. He has therefore condensed freely, expunged entire scenes and diminished the importance of particular characters, that he might have room to expatiate when needful. As the friend and protégé of Southampton, then a Roman Catholic, he could not but find his predecessor much too polemical. While retaining the Protestant colour of the original piece, and painting Romish ecclesiastics in a forbidding aspect, he has suppressed some violent anti-papal tirades and jocularities at the expense of the monastic orders. Yet he has not departed by a hair's breadth from his predecessor's position as a patriotic poet; nor could he, for John's resistance to France and Rome alone prevents the canon that no tragic protagonist shall be wholly bad from being violated in his person. The old writer was a middling poet and an artless playwright, but Shakespeare

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himself could not have bettered the moral he draws from the story of King John:—

“A mother, though she be unnatural,
Is better than the kindest stepdame is.
Let never Englishman trust foreign rule.”

The disappointed French pretender enforces the same lesson:—

“It boots not me,
Nor any prince nor power of Christendom,
To seek to win this island Albion,
Unless we have a party in the realm.”

This is entirely to the point, but the diction is prosaic. If the old writer's power of expression were equal to his justness of perception he would frequently succeed well. He knows how John ought to feel better than what John ought to say:—

“Set down, set down the load not worth your pain,
For done am I with deadly sounding grief;
Sickly and succourless, hopeless of any good.
The world hath wearied me, and I have wearied it.
It loaths I live, I live and loath myself.
Who pities me? to whom have I been kind?
But to a few, a few will pity me.
Why die I not? Death scorns so vile a prey.
Why live I not? Life hates so sad a prize.
I sue to both to be retained of either,
But both are deaf: I can be heard of neither.”

Here are the rudiments of eloquence. If Shakespeare had followed the example of his predecessor in placing

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some effective speeches and soliloquies in the mouth of the stricken king, he would have dignified the latter part of his piece, which is animated indeed, but not so overwhelmingly tragical as he might easily have made it. Perhaps he wrote in haste: perhaps he shrank from carrying the humiliation of the Crown too far in a drama where the Crown represented the nation. He has taken another way of reconciling us as far as may be to his ignoble hero by depicting him as the object of the unswerving loyalty of the personage who morally, as John officially, represents the Englishman. The character of Faulconbridge, which seems to be founded upon a tradition of that unscrupulous soldier of fortune, Faukes de Breauté, a man of might in the days of John, and of extraction sufficiently obscure to pass for illegitimate, belongs substantially to the old dramatist; but while he has only thought of enlivening his action by the introduction of a semi-comic personage, Shakespeare has framed an Englishman so representative of his country in strength and weakness that we must accept his verdict on John as the verdict of the nation. With signal tact, having once established Faulconbridge's lineage, he forbears to remind us that Faulconbridge is John's half-brother, and consequently bound to him by even stronger ties than personal loyalty and zeal for the public welfare. To give more weight to Faulconbridge's action, he has considerably toned down the humorous element in the character as he received it from his predecessor, and in one or two soliloquies has introduced a vein of sardonic criticism on the world's

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ways, sufficient to show that the speaker is a man of sense and reflection, and not a mere soldier. When upon the death of John such a man exclaims : —

“ Art thou gone so ? I do but stay behind
To do the office for thee of revenge,
And then my soul shall wait on thee to heaven,
As it on earth hath been thy servant still.”

we feel that a verdict has been rendered which may surprise but which cannot be ignored. England is speaking by the mouth of this most representative Englishman, and absolves her guilty and ill-starred king.

The redemption of John consists in the fact that he, too, is a representative of England. He is even more : he is the prototype of Elizabeth as regards the political situation with which he is grappling, though by no means as regards personal character, and is performing the part ingloriously which she would have performed gloriously. Shakespeare takes the first opportunity of showing that John is his hero, not in virtue of any pretension of his own to the heroic character, but in his official capacity as guardian of the independence of the realm. Scarcely has he appealed to “ our strong possession and our right ” when his shrewd old mother whispers : —

“ Your strong possession much more than your right,
Or else it must go wrong with you and me.”

How superior seems his competitor, Arthur, who has not only right but youthful innocence and every amiable quality ! But Arthur has a fatal disqualification : he is the tool of the foreigner, and can only hope to succeed

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by foreign arms. Austria promises to gain for him not merely the districts in France to which he lays claim, but

“That pale, that white-faced shore,
Whose foot spurns back the ocean’s roaring tides,
And coops from other lands her islanders,
Even till that England, hedged in with the main,
That water-walled bulwark, still secure
And confident from foreign purposes,
Even till that utmost corner of the west
Salute thee for her king : till then, fair boy,
Will I not think of home, but follow arms.”

After this, Arthur is clearly impossible. John, however sorry a personage, represents national independence, and, granted that there may be defects in his title, has a moral claim to the allegiance of the country. Shakespeare has also taken the most favourable view of John’s character of which circumstances admitted, overlooking the historians’ charges of ferocity, rapacity, and lust. These he could well afford to disregard as not essential to his main action, while his view of such of John’s private failings as affected his public character is probably correct. John’s chief fault, unkingly as it is, is not so much a vice as an infirmity. It is an excessive timourousness. Under the pressure of fear he commits or rather designs villainous actions without being absolutely a villain. Nor is his the fear that trembles at its own shadow. He is not daunted by the mere threats of his adversaries, nor does his defiance of them evaporate in mere words. Until actually defeated he bears himself proudly and well ; but when he is once driven into a peril-

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ous strait his quick intelligence shows him the situation, and he is incapable of meeting it in a manly spirit. His sole idea is to disarm the imminent peril, and for this end no manœuvre is too base. He is not devoid of compassion for Arthur or of shame at the temporary resignation of his crown, but concern for his own safety overbalances both. Shakespeare has done the best possible for him by putting some of the finest poetry of the play into his mouth, especially when circumstances make him the mouthpiece of England:—

“ No Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions ;
But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,
So under Him that great supremacy,
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,
Without the assistance of a mortal hand :
So tell the pope, all reverence set apart
To him and his usurp'd authority.”

Every auditor knew that this was the position Elizabeth had taken up and was still maintaining, and must have felt that the play's centre of gravity lay there, and that in comparison with it the fate of Arthur, however tragic and pathetic, was but a subordinate detail. Shakespeare has further mitigated John's humiliation by passing over everything relating to Magna Charta, and ascribing the barons' revolt to horror at a crime imputed to him, of which, though in intention guilty, he was in act innocent. Our sympathies run counter to those who support a foreign invader on an imaginary ground, and whatever is lost by the barons is gained by

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John. It is true that the exhibition of *Magna Charta* on the stage would not have been suffered by the government in Shakespeare's time; but even if this obstacle had not existed Shakespeare would probably have omitted it on dramatic grounds.

Faulconbridge is not merely the faithful follower who throws the shield of his loyalty over John, but also his complement, who fills up the measure of what is lacking in him. Could John's official and Faulconbridge's personal character be united in the same individual, England would have a perfect representative. As a type of his country, he is made to participate in the most characteristic national faults; he is boisterous, aggressive, and contemptuous of the feelings of others. His animosity to Austria is explained by the Austrian duke's behaviour to his father, strangely exaggerated by the assertion (a legacy from the old play) put into the king of France's mouth that Austria has been accessory to Cœur-de-lion's death. The mixture of truculence and joviality gives a slightly comic tint to the character, and tends to relieve the general gloom of a tragedy full of "treasons, stratagems, and spoils." The importance of Faulconbridge's part justifies in some measure what appears an artistic fault, the inordinate proportion of the first act devoted to his affairs, which have no connection with the main business of the play. The fault, for such it must be deemed, is partly due to Shakespeare's refined delicacy. The author of the old play saves space by bringing Lady Faulconbridge on the stage while the dispute as to her son's legitimacy is being agitated.

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Shakespeare, comprehending the awkwardness of the situation, introduces her in a subsequent scene, which mitigates her embarrassment, but prolongs the action.

Faulconbridge thus performs for his master a service somewhat akin to that which Siegfried renders to King Gunther in the *Nibelungen Lied*. John takes lustre from his follower, and appears a less unworthy forerunner of the great conflict of Elizabeth's times. He is further helped by a daring sacrifice of historical to poetical truth. Arthur is represented as laying claim to the Crown of England. This he never did. His pretensions were limited to the French duchies, but so restricted a stage would not have fitted the great contest of Elizabeth with Rome and Spain, which was never to be out of the mind of dramatist or spectator. Shakespeare has again deviated from historical truth for a most obvious reason, in making Arthur little more than a child instead of the adolescent that he really was. But for this the heart-breaking scene with Hubert would lose most of its pathos, which depends less upon the atrocity of the crime than the helplessness of the victim. It is remarkable that the idea of blinding the young prince must have been an after-thought, and that Shakespeare has not been at the trouble to make it consistent with what precedes and follows. John's hints to Hubert, that his nephew must disappear, foreshadow his death; there is no suggestion of his being blinded. When, however, Hubert visits Arthur in prison he presents a warrant for blinding, not killing him; but in the subsequent scene the warrant is for Arthur's death, and

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John has evidently no idea that his nephew's eyes have been in jeopardy, or that his life has not been taken.

The blinding is borrowed from the old play, and the absence of all endeavour to reconcile the two versions argues that Shakespeare's drama must have been composed in great haste. This is not wholly disadvantageous; if on the one hand some situations are worked out less thoroughly than might have been expected, on the other the language is brilliantly energetic and rapid. The resemblance between John's behaviour to Hubert and Elizabeth's to Secretary Davison has been frequently observed, and it is certainly remarkable that Shakespeare ventured near such dangerous ground. It must be remembered, however, that Shakespeare's patron, Essex, had persistently interceded for Davison.

The principal fault of "King John," viewed as poetry, is an occasional employment of conceits below the dignity of tragedy, which unfortunately insinuate themselves into the finest scenes where simplicity and severity are most called for. In the unutterably pathetic scene just adverted to, the beautiful thought that the iron with which Hubert would brand Arthur's eyes had grown cold, as though the senseless metal refused to be his accomplice, is followed by a number of pretty quaint ingenuities entirely out of keeping with tragic emotion. The distraught Constance calls death *an odoriferous stench*, and follows this up with a tirade that can only be described as a choice specimen of the genus of the forcible feeble. It must be acknowledged that she soon recovers herself, and Shakespeare has seldom reached a

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greater height of impassioned eloquence than in the thrilling scorn of some of her outbursts and the heart-rending pathos of others. The tragedy queen is a very human personage, and at bottom such as may be encountered in any order of society. With all her grandeur, Constance, in the light in which she is here displayed, is just such a mother as nine-tenths of the mothers of the world. She is not ambitious for herself, all her ambition is concentrated upon her idolised boy; she would not have shown half the emotion for a daughter. The idea that her Arthur should lose an atom of his right is insufferable to her; rather than endure it she will drench kingdoms in blood; and when the wrong is sanctioned by her own friends, her indignation becomes absolute frenzy. It is inconceivable to her that there can be two opinions on the question, or that anything should for a moment be put into competition with the redress of her son's wrongs:—

“ You are forsworn, forsworn ;
You came in arms to spill mine enemies' blood,
But now in arms you strengthen it with yours :
The grappling vigour and rough frown of war
Is cold in amity and painted peace,
And our oppression hath made up this league.
Arm, arm, you heavens, against these perjured kings !
A widow cries ; be husband to me, heavens !
Let not the hours of this ungodly day
Wear out the day in peace ; but, ere sunset,
Set armed discord 'twixt these perjured kings ! ”

The shrewishness of Constance in the early scenes is equally in keeping, she is living throughout at a white

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heat of passionate excitement. She could bear any strain of conflict indefinitely, but she cannot bear failure, and when her cause is lost she vanishes in death like a lamp deprived of air. The effect of her vehemence is heightened by the contrast with Arthur, the model of gentle innocence. The pathos of the scene where the poor boy, rent and torn among the fierce people about him, exclaims

“ Good my mother, peace !

I would that I were low laid in my grave.

I am not worth this coil that 's made for me,”

is fully as great as that of Constance's famous reply to the not unreasonable admonition of the cold-hearted and worldly King Philip, “ You are as fond of grief as of your child ” :—

“ Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form ;
Then have I reason to be fond of grief.
Fare you well : had you such a loss as I,
I could give better comfort than you do.”

Constance clearly does herself great injustice when she declares that she could not have loved her son if he had been

“Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, prodigious.”

The maternal instinct would have overcome all such trifling drawbacks, and she would have thought no more

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of them than the sage and temperate Queen Elinor thinks of the moral deformities of *her* son.

Constance, though a real historical character, is dramatically Shakespeare's creation. Pandulph, the Papal Nuncio, is an historical character in every point of view ; or rather, in the absence of direct information respecting him, Shakespeare has been careful to paint him in colours beseeing his function. He appears as the incarnation of Roman arrogance in his assertion of Papal authority, and of Roman unscrupulousness in his readiness to annul every moral obligation inconvenient to the Holy See. With such a sanction, perjury and slaughter become virtues, and there is no moral fibre in Pandulph's character to render such teaching in any way difficult to him. Intellectually he is far superior to any of the people with whom he comes into contact. "How green you are, and fresh in this old world !" he says pityingly to the young Dauphin, when the latter laments the captivity of Arthur, which at first sight naturally appears a disaster. But Pandulph has fathomed John's nature, and foresees that his victory will prove his ruin.

"Tis strange to think how much King John hath lost
In this which he accounts so clearly won."

Pandulph's Italian craft is nevertheless unable to control fiercer and more impulsive natures, and he is left pleading for liberty to speak, which he does not obtain. Although the denunciation of Papal interference in English affairs is the salt and soul of the drama, it has necessarily had the bad effect of excluding one great and noble

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contemporary figure from Shakespeare's canvas. The introduction of Magna Charta was, as we have seen, impossible in Shakespeare's day, but Stephen Langton, the patriotic Archbishop, and no friend of the Nuncio's, might well have been represented as bringing about the barons' submission to the King, and we should thus have got rid of the offensive and incredible incident of the revelation of the Dauphin's plot to destroy his own English partisans. Shakespeare took this from the old play, where it occupies two scenes: he has shown his usual judgment by reducing these to one, but it is to be wished that he could have banished the awkward contrivance altogether. To have represented a Romish ecclesiastic in a favourable light, nevertheless, would have been to undo with one hand what he had throughout been doing with the other. The poetry and passion of King John will not be surpassed, but there is room for a rehandling of the subject in the calmer atmosphere and with the more ample knowledge of the twentieth century. Pandulph's character, nevertheless, would have to remain as Shakespeare left it, as striking a contrast to Faulconbridge's as the outward man must have been in costume, bearing, and complexion.

Had Shakespeare written when the Sovereign was secure upon the throne, when Spain had become a second-class power, when Roman Catholicism was no longer a synonym of disloyalty, and when a scene could safely be laid at Runnymede, "King John" might have been a more majestic if less impassioned play. It may still be questioned whether it would not have lost in fire and spirit

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even more than it gained in breadth of view and tranquil wisdom. At all events the shortcomings of partisanship are not imputable to Shakespeare, whose duty and whose interest alike constrained him to satisfy the needs of his own age. There are, nevertheless, instances of defective dramatic economy and missed opportunities to which this apology does not apply. We shall not notice Shakespeare's neglect of chronology and arbitrary dealing with the facts of history further than by the remark, that never has he shown himself more masterful than here, where all the chief events of sixteen years, save one, — the most important of all, conspicuous by its absence, — are flung together into one seething cauldron of turmoil. This does not exceed the poet's prerogative, and the less so as the events of John's reign, viewed in the ever-lengthening vista of Time, appeared to Shakespeare much closer together than they really were, and appear to us closer still. Nor need we quarrel with the extraordinary romance of the double siege of Angiers, derived from the old drama or the introduction of artillery before the reputed inventor of gunpowder was born. The main fault is that, probably from haste of production, Shakespeare does not always make the most of his opportunities. We look for something thrilling when the dying John is brought forth writhing in the grasp of a mortal fever, and at first get nothing but frigidity and fretfulness : —

“ None of you will bid the winter come
To thrust his icy fingers in my maw,
Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course
Through my burn'd bosom, nor entreat the north

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To make his bleak winds kiss my parched lips
And comfort me with cold. I do not ask you much,
I beg cold comfort ; and you are so strait,
And so ingrateful, you deny me that."

Yet here too the speaker rallies, and expires asking of
the weal of the kingdom : —

"O cousin, thou art come to set mine eye :
The tackle of my heart is crack'd and burn'd,
And all the shrouds wherewith my life should sail
Are turned to one thread, one little hair :
My heart hath one poor string to stay it by,
Which holds but till thy news be uttered ;
And then all this thou seest is but a clod
And module of confounded royalty.

Bast. The Dauphin is preparing hitherward,
Where heaven He knows how we shall answer him ;
For in a night the best part of my power,
As I upon advantage did remove,
Were in the Washes all unwarily
Devoured by the unexpected flood.

[*The King dies.*]"

This mailed tragedy stands to Shakespeare's other plays of English history in the relation of a prologue, not merely as first in order of period, but as depicting a rudimentary condition of English society. It is Shakespeare's one purely mediæval play, for by Henry IV's time a modern element has come in, and Richard II is rather a study of character than a delineation of contemporary manners. "King John," on the other hand, gives "the very form and pressure of the time."

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It is therefore distinguished by the overwhelming force of the passions represented, and also by their simplicity. Every leading character has a single object, which he pursues with no more deviation than the stress of circumstances demands. John would save his crown and Faulconbridge his country; Constance would vindicate her son's rights and Pandulph would subjugate England to the Pope. There is no complication of motives, no hesitation or qualification; passion is primitive, simple, and Titanic. The language is consequently high pitched throughout, but without exaggeration. Everything is on the grand scale, as it ought to be when the interlocutors are kings, queens, princesses, nobles, and cardinals, and there is hardly a person of humble birth or low calling in the piece. The existence of the commonalty is not, indeed, unrecognised. The sturdy citizens of Angiers stand up stoutly for themselves against two kings: Pandulph threatens John with the loss of his subjects' hearts, and Hubert reports their discontent in a passage of unsurpassed graphic force: —

“Young Arthur's death is common in their mouths :
And when they talk of him, they shake their heads
And whisper one another in the ear ;
And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist,
Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.
I saw a smith stand with his hammer, thus,
The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,
With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news ;
Who, with his shears and measure in his hand,

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•
Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste
Had falsely thrust upon contrary feet,
Told of a many thousand warlike French
That were embattailed and rank'd in Kent."

But even this speech shows the speaker's disdain for the common people, except in so far as they may be dangerous, and they hardly appear except as a force in the background. The land is as yet the property of kings and nobles, and the atmosphere of the play is entirely oligarchic. Yet, different as are the conditions from those of his own day, Shakespeare thoroughly carries out his great purpose of admonishing his contemporaries what may become of them if they give place to civil discord. Absorbed in this chief design, he slights every minor attraction. There is no comedy in "King John," no music, no love-making, no by-play or under-plot to divert attention from the serious action; save for the sallies of the Bastard, there is even no humour. It relies upon its political significance, more apparent to contemporaries than to posterity, upon mediæval picturesqueness and a martial spirit that stirs the blood throughout, upon splendid language and scenes of intense pathos. The brilliant picture of the mediæval world is not morally attractive, and the hard facts of history jar with poetical justice, which is nevertheless vindicated in the end. The plotters and schemers are eventually baffled; the blunt honesty of Faulconbridge gains its desire in the restoration of national concord and independence; and though Arthur is in his grave, another innocent boy arises in his place:—

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“Be of good comfort, prince, for you are born
To set a form upon that indigest
Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude.”

“King John” was written before 1598, appearing in Meres’s list of Shakespeare’s plays up to that year. It was first printed in the folio of 1623, and there is no record of any early performance from which the date could be inferred. The absence of prose, which has been alleged as a proof of its being an early play, appears to us sufficiently accounted for by the high rank of the *dramatis personæ*. It was, in our opinion, hastily written in response to some strong outburst of national feeling, and we have little doubt that this was prompted by the apprehensions of a Spanish invasion in the summer of 1595, when, as Camden tells us, “the wailing women with fresh sorrow lamented that their slain sons and brethren were not reserved for these times.” A descent was actually effected in Cornwall and three fishing villages burned, “and these were the first and last Spaniards that ever made any hostile landing in England.” The scene so graphically painted of the artisans devouring news of embattled invaders might be witnessed at any smithy or hostel: and the words put into the mouth of Austria could never have come more forcibly home to a British audience:—

“By how much unexpected, by so much
We must awake endeavour for defence,
For courage mounteth with occasion:
Let them be welcome then, we are prepared.”

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Being written to serve a temporary though a noble purpose, "King John" could not retain quite the same vividness of interest for succeeding ages, and its popularity on the stage has been below its desert, yet there are incidents of interest in its dramatic history. Its popularity in Shakespeare's own time may be inferred from the circumstance that, the play never having been printed until its appearance in the first folio of 1623, new editions of the old "Troublesome Raigne" were fraudulently palmed off as Shakespeare's work in 1611 and 1622. There is, however, no record of any performance until 1787, when Rich revived it with success. About ten years previously Cibber had arranged for the production of an altered version under the title of "Papal Tyranny," but even in that age Shakespeare was preferred to Cibber, and upon the rumour of the intended desecration getting abroad "such a clamour arose that Cibber went to the playhouse, and, without saying a word to anybody, took the play from the prompter's desk and marched off with it in his pocket." Nothing, however, was lost by waiting. The Pretender did for Shakespeare and Cibber what Philip of Spain had done for Shakespeare and his anonymous predecessor. It is a proof of the national and patriotic character of "King John" that the rebellion of 1745 not only brought it back to the boards, but reanimated the suspended vitality of Cibber's abominable parody, which was acted ten times at the rival theatre, while the genuine Shakespeare appears to have succeeded still better. Since then, King John has been frequently revived, and always with success, but has never established itself as a

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popular play. It has always been a favourite with actors of high genius, such as Kemble, Kean, Macready, Young, and among actresses Mrs. Siddons and Helen Faucit. Young chose the character of King John for his portrait. Yet these great tragedians must have felt that there were other plays in the Shakespearean repertory which afforded greater scope for their powers. John, with all his opportunities for intense facial expression and effective declamation, must be an unsympathetic part. The actor can never hope to make his audience feel with him, and must be conscious that he is contending against the stream. Constance affords unsurpassed opportunities as far as she goes, but makes great demands upon the performer's physical strength, even though she does not go very far. In the third act she disappears from the stage, and the actress who as Lady Macbeth or Desdemona would have preserved her empire over the audience to the last, finds herself dramatically non-existent. It may thus be conjectured that the feelings of performers rather than of the public occasion the comparative neglect of one of the plays of Shakespeare which, on patriotic and moral grounds, one would wish to see most frequently performed. It is remarkable that there is but one record of a renowned performance of Faulconbridge, one of the personages out of whom a gifted actor might most easily create an exceptional part. Perhaps the leading tragedian, conscious of the difficulties inherent in John, has feared to be overshadowed by a really great Faulconbridge. It is to be noted that the actor (Walker, in 1787) who did achieve a memorable success had pre-

INTRODUCTION

viously been eminent as Captain Macheath, another part requiring the interfusion of humorous with serious elements.

All Shakespeare's dramas on English history should be studied together and regarded as a single work, the national epic of England. But, were it necessary to select one from the rest for an educational purpose, none would have a better claim than "King John."

RICHARD GARNETT.

**THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
KING JOHN**

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ¹

KING JOHN.

PRINCE HENRY, son to the king.

ARTHUR, Duke of Bretagne, nephew to the king.

The Earl of PEMBROKE.

The Earl of ESSEX.

The Earl of SALISBURY.

The LORD BIGOT.

HUBERT DE BURGH.

ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE, son to Sir Robert Faulconbridge.

PHILIP the BASTARD, his half-brother.

JAMES GURNEY, servant to Lady Faulconbridge.

PETER of Pomfret, a prophet.

PHILIP, King of France.

LEWIS, the Dauphin.

LYMOGES, Duke of Austria.

CARDINAL PANDULPH, the Pope's legate.

MELUN, a French lord.

CHATILLON, ambassador from France to King John.

QUEEN ELINOR, mother to King John.

CONSTANCE, mother to Arthur.

BLANCH of Spain, niece to King John.

LADY FAULCONBRIDGE.

Lords, Citizens of Angiers, Sheriff, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers,
Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE: *Partly in England, and partly in France*

¹ This play was printed for the first time in the First Folio, where it is divided into acts and scenes, although the divisions are often arbitrary, and compel much editorial revision. A list of the *dramatis personæ* was first supplied by Rowe in 1709 (cf. for the entry Lymoges, Duke of Austria, II, i, 5, *infra*, and note). *The Troublesome Raigne of John, King of England*, the piece by another hand, which Shakespeare largely adapted in his own play, was first published in 1594, and was reissued in 1611 and 1622.



ACT FIRST — SCENE I

KING JOHN'S PALACE

Enter KING JOHN, QUEEN ELINOR, PEMBROKE, ESSEX, SALISBURY, and others, with CHATILLON

KING JOHN



OW, SAY, CHATILLON,
what would France with us?

CHAT. Thus, after greeting,
speaks the King of France
In my behaviour to the majesty,
The borrowed majesty, of Eng-
land here.

ELI. A strange beginning:
"borrowed majesty!"

K. JOHN. Silence, good
mother; hear the embassy.

CHAT. Philip of France, in
right and true behalf

Of thy deceased brother Geffrey's son,
Arthur Plantagenet, lays most lawful claim

3 *In my behaviour*] In my person. Cf. V, ii, 129, *infra*: "For thus his
royalty doth speak in me."

To this fair island and the territories, 10
To Ireland, Poitiers, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,
Desiring thee to lay aside the sword
Which sways usurpingly these several titles,
And put the same into young Arthur's hand,
Thy nephew and right royal sovereign.

K. JOHN. What follows if we disallow of this?

CHAT. The proud control of fierce and bloody war,
To enforce these rights so forcibly withheld.

K. JOHN. Here have we war for war and blood for
blood,
Controlment for controlment: so answer France. 20

CHAT. Then take my king's defiance from my mouth,
The farthest limit of my embassy.

K. JOHN. Bear mine to him, and so depart in
peace:
Be thou as lightning in the eyes of France;
For ere thou canst report I will be there,
The thunder of my cannon shall be heard:
So hence! Be thou the trumpet of our wrath
And sullen presage of your own decay.
An honourable conduct let him have.
Pembroke, look to 't. Farewell, Chatillon. 30

[*Exeunt Chatillon and Pembroke.*]

- 17 *control*] coercion, compulsion. Cf. line 20, *infra*, "controlment."
26 *cannon*] Shakespeare, characteristically indifferent to strict historical accuracy, antedates the use of gunpowder (as in II, i, 210, *seq. infra*) by nearly a century and a half. John's reign began in 1199.
• Cannon are said to have been first employed at the battle of Crécy in 1346.

28 *sullen presage*] (messenger of) doleful foreboding.

ELI. What now, my son! have I not ever said
How that ambitious Constance would not cease
Till she had kindled France and all the world,
Upon the right and party of her son?
This might have been prevented and made whole
With very easy arguments of love,
Which now the manage of two kingdoms must
With fearful bloody issue arbitrate.

K. JOHN. Our strong possession and our right for us.

ELI. Your strong possession much more than your
right,

40

Or else it must go wrong with you and me:
So much my conscience whispers in your ear,
Which none but heaven and you and I shall hear.

Enter a Sheriff

ESSEX. My liege, here is the strangest controversy
Come from the country to be judged by you,
That e'er I heard: shall I produce the men?

K. JOHN. Let them approach.
Our abbeyes and our priories shall pay
This expedition's charge.

Enter ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE, and PHILIP his bastard brother

What men are you?

BAST. Your faithful subject I, a gentleman
Born in Northamptonshire, and eldest son,
As I suppose, to Robert Faulconbridge,
A soldier, by the honour-giving hand
Of Cœur-de-lion knighted in the field.

50

37 *manage*] management, administration, government.

K. JOHN. What art thou ?

ROB. The son and heir to that same Faulconbridge.

K. JOHN. Is that the elder, and art thou the heir ?

You came not of one mother then, it seems.

BAST. Most certain of one mother, mighty king;
That is well known; and, as I think, one father: 60

But for the certain knowledge of that truth
I put you o'er to heaven and to my mother:
Of that I doubt, as all men's children may.

ELI. Out on thee, rude man! thou dost shame thy
mother

And wound her honour with this diffidence.

BAST. I, madam? no, I have no reason for it;
That is my brother's plea and none of mine;
The which if he can prove, a' pops me out
At least from fair five hundred pound a year:
Heaven guard my mother's honour and my land! 70

K. JOHN. A good blunt fellow. Why, being younger
born,

Doth he lay claim to thine inheritance?

BAST. I know not why, except to get the land.
But once he slander'd me with bastardy:
But whether I be as true begot or no,
That still I lay upon my mother's head;
But that I am as well begot, my liege, —

62 *put you o'er*] refer you.

65 *diffidence*] distrust.

75**whether*] pronounced in Shakespeare's time as a monosyllable. The first three Folios read *where*, which the Fourth Folio first expanded into the ordinary spelling.

Fair fall the bones that took the pains for me! —

Compare our faces and be judge yourself.

If old Sir Robert did beget us both 80

And were our father and this son like him,

O old Sir Robert, father, on my knee

I give heaven thanks I was not like to thee!

K. JOHN. Why, what a madcap hath heaven lent us
here!

ELI. He hath a trick of Cœur-de-lion's face;

The accent of his tongue affecteth him.

Do you not read some tokens of my son

In the large composition of this man?

K. JOHN. Mine eye hath well examined his parts 90

And finds them perfect Richard. Sirrah, speak,

What doth move you to claim your brother's land?

BAST. Because he hath a half-face, like my father.

With half that face would he have all my land:

A half-faced groat five hundred pound a year!

ROB. My gracious liege, when that my father lived,

Your brother did employ my father much, —

BAST. Well, sir, by this you cannot get my land:

Your tale must be how he employ'd my mother.

ROB. And once dispatch'd him in an embassy

To Germany, there with the emperor 100

To treat of high affairs touching that time.

78 *Fair fall*] Luck befall.

85 *trick*] trace; the word is a heraldic term for a tracing or copy.

86 *affecteth*] smacks of, resembles.

94 *groat*] a small silver coin (worth fourpence) stamped with the king's head in profile or half-face. Such coins were first issued by Henry VII.

KING JOHN

ACT I

The advantage of his absence took the king
 And in the mean time sojourn'd at my father's;
 Where how he did prevail I shame to speak,
 But truth is truth: large lengths of seas and shores
 Between my father and my mother lay,
 As I have heard my father speak himself,
 When this same lusty gentleman was got.
 Upon his death-bed he by will bequeath'd
 His lands to me, and took it on his death 110
 That this my mother's son was none of his;
 And if he were, he came into the world
 Full fourteen weeks before the course of time.
 Then, good my liege, let me have what is mine,
 My father's land, as was my father's will.

K. JOHN. Sirrah, your brother is legitimate;
 Your father's wife did after wedlock bear him,
 And if she did play false, the fault was hers;
 Which fault lies on the hazards of all husbands 120
 That marry wives. Tell me, how if my brother,
 Who, as you say, took pains to get this son,
 Had of your father claim'd this son for his?
 In sooth, good friend, your father might have kept
 This calf, bred from his cow, from all the world;
 In sooth he might; then, if he were my brother's,
 My brother might not claim him; nor your father,
 Being none of his, refuse him: this concludes;

110 *took it on his death*] affirmed it on his deathbed, in the solemn
 • expectation of death.

119 *lies . . . husbands*] is among the risks all husbands run.

127 *concludes*] is conclusive.

My mother's son did get your father's heir;
Your father's heir must have your father's land.

ROB. Shall then my father's will be of no force 130
To dispossess that child which is not his?

BAST. Of no more force to dispossess me, sir,
Than was his will to get me, as I think.

ELI. Whether hadst thou rather be a Faulconbridge,
And like thy brother, to enjoy thy land,
Or the reputed son of Cœur-de-lion,
Lord of thy presence and no land beside?

BAST. Madam, an if my brother had my shape,
And I had his, sir Robert's his, like him;
And if my legs were two such riding-rods, 140
My arms such eel-skins stuff'd, my face so thin
That in mine ear I durst not stick a rose
Lest men should say "Look, where three-farthings
goes!"

And, to his shape, were heir to all this land,

137 *Lord of thy presence*] Owner of thy fine presence or person. Cf.
II, i, 367, *infra*, where the king describes himself as "Lord of our
presence."

139 *his, sir Robert's his*] The speaker accentuates his breezy scorn of
Sir Robert's person by using "his" like a substantive, which con-
notes all the feebleness of Sir Robert's frame.

140 *riding-rods*] thin wands used, by horsemen; riding whips.

142 *rose*] Fashionable Elizabethans seem to have occasionally worn
roses or other flowers in their pierced ears. The Bastard refers
to this practice rather than to another and a more common custom
of tying rosettes of ribbon about the ear.

143 *three-farthings*] a very thin silver coin of Queen Elizabeth's day, on
the reverse of which a rose was stamped.

144 *to his shape, were heir*] in addition to his shape, were he heir.

KING JOHN

ACT I

Would I might never stir from off this place,
I would give it every foot to have this face;
I would not be sir Nob in any case.

ELI. I like thee well: wilt thou forsake thy fortune,
Bequeath thy land to him and follow me?

I am a soldier and now bound to France. 150

BAST. Brother, take you my land, I'll take my
chance.

Your face hath got five hundred pound a year,
Yet sell your face for five pence and 't is dear.

Madam, I'll follow you unto the death.

ELI. Nay, I would have you go before me thither.

BAST. Our country manners give our betters way.

K. JOHN. What is thy name?

BAST. Philip, my liege, so is my name begun;
Philip, good old sir Robert's wife's eldest son.

K. JOHN. From henceforth bear his name whose
form thou bear'st: 160

Kneel thou down Philip, but rise more great,
Arise sir Richard and Plantagenet.

BAST. Brother by the mother's side, give me your
hand:

My father gave me honour, yours gave land.
Now blessed be the hour, by night or day,
When I was got, sir Robert was away!

ELI. The very spirit of Plantagenet!
I am thy grandam, Richard; call me so.

147 *sir Nob*] a nickname for Sir Robert.

153 *your face for five pence*] a penny more than the worth of "a half-faced groat." The banter carries on the suggestion of line 94.

BAST. Madam, by chance but not by truth; what
though?

Something about, a little from the right, 170

In at the window, or else o'er the hatch:

Who dares not stir by day must walk by night,

And have is have, however men do catch:

Near or far off, well won is still well shot,

And I am I, howe'er I was begot.

K. JOHN. Go, Faulconbridge: now hast thou thy
desire;

A landless knight makes thee a landed squire.

Come, madam, and come, Richard, we must speed

For France, for France, for it is more than need.

BAST. Brother, adieu: good fortune come to thee! 180
For thou wast got i' the way of honesty.

[Exeunt all but Bastard.]

A foot of honour better than I was;

But many a many foot of land the worse.

Well, now can I make any Joan a lady.

"Good den, sir Richard!" — "God-a-mercy, fellow!" —

And if his name be George, I'll call him Peter;

For new-made honour doth forget men's names;

170 *Something about . . . right]* Somewhat deviously, a little off the
straight path, left-handedly.

171 *In . . . hatch]* Colloquial euphemisms for illegitimate birth. "The
hatch" is the half-door. Cf. V, ii, 138, *infra*, "take the hatch," i. e.,
take a hurried departure.

177 *A landless knight]* A reference to John's familiar nickname of
Lacklands.

184 *Joan a lady]* Cf. *L. L. L.*, III, i, 195, "Some men must love my
lady, and some Joan."

185 *Good den]* Good evening.

'T is too respective and too sociable
 For your conversion. Now your traveller,
 He and his toothpick at my worship's mess, 190
 And when my knightly stomach is sufficed,
 Why then I suck my teeth and catechize
 My picked man of countries: "My dear sir,"
 Thus, leaning on mine elbow, I begin,
 "I shall beseech you" — that is question now;
 And then comes answer like an Absey book:
 "O sir," says answer, "at your best command;
 At your employment; at your service, sir:"
 "No, sir," says question, "I, sweet sir, at yours:"
 And so, ere answer knows what question would, 200
 Saving in dialogue of compliment,
 And talking of the Alps and Apennines,
 The Pyrenean and the river Po,
 It draws towards supper in conclusion so.
 But this is worshipful society,

188-189 *too respective and too sociable For your conversion*] too considerate (of the feelings of inferiors) and too suggestive of social equality to suit a change from low to high estate.

190 *his toothpick*] obtrusive play with the toothpick was a current affectation of travelled men of fashion. Cf. Overbury's *Characters*, 1616. — Of an affected Traveller: "His *toothpick* is a main part of his behaviour."

my worship's mess] my dining table.

193 *picked*] refined, fastidious. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, i, 136: "the age is grown so *picked*."

196 *an Absey book*] an A. B. C. book, a primer from which children *learnt the alphabet and simple phrases.

201 *dialogue of compliment*] talk consisting of complimentary phrases.

203 *The Pyrenean*] The Pyrenees.

And fits the mounting spirit like myself;
 For he is but a bastard to the time
 That doth not smack of observation;
 And so am I, whether I smack or no;
 And not alone in habit and device,
 Exterior form, outward accoutrement,
 But from the inward motion to deliver
 Sweet, sweet, sweet poison for the age's tooth:
 Which, though I will not practise to deceive,
 Yet, to avoid deceit, I mean to learn;
 For it shall strew the footsteps of my rising.
 But who comes in such haste in riding-robcs?
 What woman-post is this? hath she no husband
 That will take pains to blow a horn before her?

210

Enter LADY FAULCONBRIDGE and JAMES GURNEY

O me! it is my mother. How now, good lady?
 What brings you here to court so hastily?

220

207-208 *For he is . . . of observation*] For he is no lawful offspring of the age — he is a mean fellow in the estimate of contemporaries — who does not show signs of having observed or studied foreign customs.

208-209 *smack . . . smack*] The Folios read *smoke* (variously spelt) in the first place and *smack* in the second. Theobald first read *smack* [*i. e.*, savour] in both places.

212-213 *from the inward . . . age's tooth*] proceeding from, or owing to the inward impulse to please the palate of the age with the extremely sweet poison of flattery.

215 *to avoid deceit*] to avoid being misled by other people's deceit, to make myself a match for the cheat.

219 *a horn*] a quibble on the obvious meaning of "post horn" and of the "horns" which a wife's infidelity was commonly said to cause to sprout from a husband's brow.

LADY F. Where is that slave, thy brother? where
is he,

That holds in chase mine honour up and down?

BAST. My brother Robert? old sir Robert's son?
Colbrand the giant, that same mighty man?
Is it sir Robert's son that you seek so?

LADY F. Sir Robert's son! Ay, thou unreverend boy,
Sir Robert's son: why scorn'st thou at sir Robert?
He is sir Robert's son, and so art thou.

BAST. James Gurney, wilt thou give us leave awhile?

GUR. Good leave, good Philip.

BAST. Philip! sparrow: James, 231
There's toys abroad: anon I'll tell thee more.

[Exit Gurney.

Madam, I was not old sir Robert's son:

225 *Colbrand the giant*] A legendary Danish hero, whose overthrow in
combat was one of the exploits traditionally assigned to Guy of
Warwick. Cf. *Hen. VIII*, V, iv, 20. "I am not Samson nor
Sir Guy nor *Colbrand*."

227 *unreverend*] irreverent.

230 *James Gurney*] Shakespeare may have called this small personage,
whom he invented, after Hugues Gournay, a Norman squire, whose
land in Normandy King John seized very early in his adventures
in France.

give us leave] withdraw.

231 *Good leave*] with all good-will. This is the only line assigned to
James Gurney, and it seems fantastic in Coleridge and Charles
Lamb to detect any peculiarly dramatic point in the words.

Philip! sparrow] Tut! Don't take me for a sparrow. Philip was
• the common nickname of the sparrow, the chirp of the bird being
thought to resemble the articulation of the word Philip.

232 *toys*] idle tales, worthless rumours.

Sir Robert might have eat his part in me
 Upon Good-Friday and ne'er broke his fast:
 Sir Robert could do well: marry, to confess,
 Could he get me? Sir Robert could not do it:
 We know his handiwork: therefore, good mother,
 To whom am I beholding for these limbs?
 Sir Robert never help to make this leg. 240

LADY F. Hast thou conspired with thy brother too,
 That for thine own gain shouldst defend mine honour?
 What means this scorn, thou most untoward knave?

BAST. Knight, knight, good mother, Basilisco-like.
 What! I am dubb'd! I have it on my shoulder.
 But, mother, I am not sir Robert's son;
 I have disclaim'd sir Robert and my land;
 Legitimation, name and all is gone:
 Then, good my mother, let me know my father;
 Some proper man, I hope: who was it, mother? 250

LADY F. Hast thou denied thyself a Faulconbridge?

BAST. As faithfully as I deny the devil.

LADY F. King Richard Cœur-de-lion was thy father:
 By long and vehement suit I was seduced
 To make room for him in my husband's bed:

234-235 *eat his part . . . his fast*] a proverbial expression implying the negation of action.

236 *to confess*] to come to confession, to make a clean breast of it.

243 *untoward*] unmannerly.

244 *Basilisco-like*] a sarcastic allusion to a braggart named Basilisco in the contemporary play of *Soliman and Perseda* (cf. Dodsley's *Old Plays*, Ed. Hazlitt, V, 271-272); Basilisco bombastically insists on being addressed as "*knight*" by a farcical servant who mockingly calls him "*knave*."

Heaven lay not my transgression to my charge!
 Thou art the issue of my dear offence,
 Which was so strongly urged past my defence.

BAST. Now, by this light, were I to get again,
 Madam, I would not wish a better father. 260

Some sins do bear their privilege on earth,
 And so doth yours; your fault was not your folly:
 Needs must you lay your heart at his dispose,
 Subjected tribute to commanding love,
 Against whose fury and unmatched force
 The aweless lion could not wage the fight,
 Nor keep his princely heart from Richard's hand.

He that perforce robs lions of their hearts
 May easily win a woman's. Ay, my mother,
 With all my heart I thank thee for my father! 270
 Who lives and dares but say thou didst not well
 When I was got, I'll send his soul to hell.

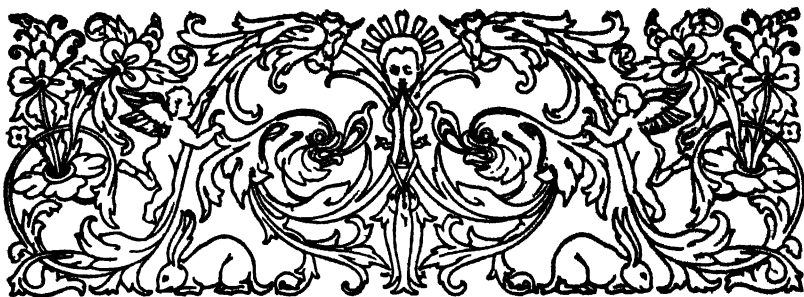
Come, lady, I will show thee to my kin;
 And they shall say, when Richard me begot,
 If thou hadst said him nay, it had been sin:

Who says it was, he lies; I say 't was not. [*Exeunt.*]

257 *dear*] grievous.

261 *Some sins . . . earth*] Some sins (despite the punishment allotted them by heaven) are privileged to pass uncensured on earth.

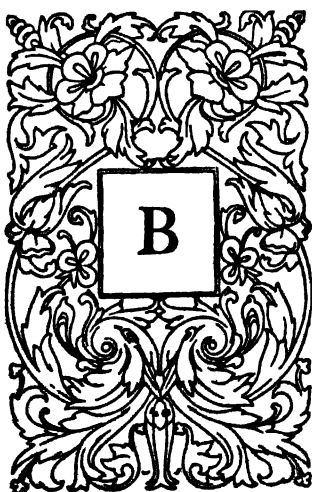
266-267 *The aweless . . . hand*] A reference to the fable that Richard I owed his surname Cœur-de-lion to his having pulled out through the mouth the heart of a lion, which was let loose upon him while he was in prison. Cf. II, i, 3, *infra*.



ACT SECOND — SCENE I — FRANCE
BEFORE ANGIERS

*Enter AUSTRIA and forces, drums, etc. on one side : on the other
KING PHILIP of France and his power ; LEWIS, ARTHUR,
CONSTANCE and attendants*

LEWIS



BEFORE ANGIERS WELL
met, brave Austria.
Arthur, that great forerunner of
thy blood,
Richard, that robb'd the lion of
his heart
And fought the holy wars in
Palestine,
By this brave duke came early
to his grave:
And for amends to his posterity,
At' our importance hither is he
come,
To spread his colours, boy, in thy behalf,
And to rebuke the usurpation

1 *Lewis*] The Folios assign this speech to Prince Lewis, the Dauphin, but
Theobald suggested that so self-sufficient an utterance could only

Of thy unnatural uncle, English John: 10
Embrace him, love him, give him welcome hither.

ARTH. God shall forgive you Cœur-de-lion's death
The rather that you give his offspring life,
Shadowing their right under your wings of war:
I give you welcome with a powerless hand,
But with a heart full of unstained love:
Welcome before the gates of Angiers, duke.

LEW. A noble boy! Who would not do thee right?

AUST. Upon thy cheek lay I this zealous kiss, 20
As seal to this indenture of my love,
That to my home I will no more return,
Till Angiers and the right thou hast in France,
Together with that pale, that white-faced shore,
Whose foot spurns back the ocean's roaring tides
And coops from other lands her islanders,

have issued from the prince's father, King Philip. Many editors accept Theobald's suggestion.

2 *forerunner*] predecessor.

3 *Richard, . . . of his heart*] Cf. I, i, 266-7, *supra*, and note.

5 *By this brave duke . . . grave*] Shakespeare follows the old play in the error of making Richard fall by the hand of the Archduke of Austria, to whom the king owed his famous imprisonment. The archduke predeceased Richard I. The king was slain four years after his captor's death while besieging the castle of the Vicomte de Limoges, one of his own vassals. The Archduke of Austria and the Vicomte de Limoges were two very different beings, but at III, i, 114, *infra*, "Limoges" and "Austria" are confusedly introduced as the titles of one and the same person; they figure in like fashion in the *dramatis personæ*.

7 *At our importance*] At our importunity, entreaty.

20 *indenture*] binding contract.

23 *that pale . . . shore*] the white cliffs of Albion.

Even till that England, hedged in with the main,
 That water-walled bulwark, still secure
 And confident from foreign purposes,
 Even till that utmost corner of the west
 Salute thee for her king: till then, fair boy, 30
 Will I not think of home, but follow arms.

CONST. O, take his mother's thanks, a widow's thanks,
 Till your strong hand shall help to give him strength
 To make a more requital to your love!

AUST. The peace of heaven is theirs that lift their
 swords

In such a just and charitable war.

K. PHI. Well then, to work: our cannon shall be bent
 Against the brows of this resisting town.
 Call for our chiefest men of discipline,
 To cull the plots of best advantages: 40
 We'll lay before this town our royal bones,
 Wade to the market-place in Frenchmen's blood,
 But we will make it subject to this boy.

CONST. Stay for an answer to your embassy,
 Lest unadvised you stain your swords with blood:
 My Lord Chatillon may from England bring
 That right in peace which here we urge in war,
 And then we shall repent each drop of blood
 That hot rash haste so indirectly shed.

34 *a more*] a greater. Cf. *Com. of Errors*, II, 2, 174, "with a more contempt."

40 *To cull . . . advantages*] To select the positions of best advantage for the assault.

45 *unadvised*] in your rashness. Cf. line 191 and V, ii, 132, *infra*.

49 *indirectly*] unrighteously.

Enter CHATILLON

K. PHI. A wonder, lady! lo, upon thy wish, 50
Our messenger Chatillon is arrived!
What England says, say briefly, gentle lord;
We coldly pause for thee; Chatillon, speak.

CHAT. Then turn your forces from this paltry siege
And stir them up against a mightier task.
England, impatient of your just demands,
Hath put himself in arms: the adverse winds,
Whose leisure I have stay'd, have given him time
To land his legions all as soon as I;
His marches are expedient to this town, 60
His forces strong, his soldiers confident.
With him along is come the mother-queen,
An Ate, stirring him to blood and strife;
With her her niece, the Lady Blanch of Spain;
With them a bastard of the king's deceased;
And all the unsettled humours of the land,
Rash, inconsiderate, fiery voluntaries,
With ladies' faces and fierce dragons' spleens,

60 *expedient*] expeditious, rapid. Cf. line 223, *infra*, "*expedient march*."

63 *Ate*] The goddess of revenge or hate, belonging to Greek mythology (cf. Homer's *Iliad*, xix, 91, *seq.*). Rowe's correction of the Folio reading *Ace*.

64 *her niece, the Lady Blanch*] daughter of John's sister Elinor, who was married to Alphonso VIII, king of Castile; hence John's *niece* and his mother Queen Elinor's *granddaughter*. Cf. lines 424, 469, and 521, *infra*.

65 *of the king's deceased*] of the deceased king's. The expression is drawn directly from the old play.

67 *voluntaries*] volunteers.

Have sold their fortunes at their native homes,
 Bearing their birthrights proudly on their backs, 70
 To make a hazard of new fortunes here:
 In brief, a braver choice of dauntless spirits
 Than now the English bottoms have waft o'er
 Did never float upon the swelling tide,
 To do offence and scath in Christendom. [*Drum beats.*
 The interruption of their churlish drums
 Cuts off more circumstance: they are at hand,
 To parley or to fight; therefore prepare.

K. PHI. How much unlook'd for is this expedition!

AUST. By how much unexpected, by so much 80
 We must awake endeavour for defence;
 For courage mounteth with occasion:
 Let them be welcome then; we are prepared.

*Enter KING JOHN, ELINOR, BLANCH, the Bastard, Lords, and
 Forces*

K. JOHN. Peace be to France, if France in peace
 permit

Our just and lineal entrance to our own;
 If not, bleed France, and peace ascend to heaven,
 Whiles we, God's wrathful agent, do correct
 Their proud contempt that beats His peace to heaven.

K. PHI. Peace be to England, if that war return
 From France to England, there to live in peace. 90
 England we love; and for that England's sake

70 *Bearing . . . backs*] Cf. *Hen. VIII*, I, i, 83-84: "O, many Have
 broke their backs with laying manors on 'em."

75 *scath*] harm, destruction; as in the modern "*scathe-less*."

77 *circumstance*] circumstantial detail.

With burden of our armour here we sweat.
 This toil of ours should be a work of thine;
 But thou from loving England art so far,
 That thou hast under-wrought his lawful king,
 Cut off the sequence of posterity,
 Out-faced infant state and done a rape
 Upon the maiden virtue of the crown.
 Look here upon thy brother Geoffrey's face;
 These eyes, these brows, were moulded out of his: 100
 This little abstract doth contain that large
 Which died in Geoffrey, and the hand of time
 Shall draw this brief into as huge a volume,
 That Geoffrey was thy elder brother born,
 And this his son; England was Geoffrey's right,
 And this is Geoffrey's: in the name of God
 How comes it then that thou art call'd a king,
 When living blood doth in these temples beat,
 Which owe the crown that thou o'ermasterest?

K. JOHN. From whom hast thou this great commis-
 sion, France, 110

To draw my answer from thy articles?

K. PHI. From that supernal judge, that stirs good
 thoughts

In any breast of strong authority,

95 *under-wrought*] undermined, supplanted.

97 *Out-faced*] Insulted, brazenly affronted.

106 *this is Geoffrey's*] Thus the Folios. The meaning is that this right
 to England (which Arthur claims) is Geoffrey's right (which Arthur
 inherits). A widely adopted change (due to Mason) reads *his is*
 * *Geoffrey's*, meaning that Arthur is now owner of what belonged to
 Geoffrey, his father.

109 *owe*] own, possess.

To look into the blots and stains of right:
 That judge hath made me guardian to this boy:
 Under whose warrant I impeach thy wrong,
 And by whose help I mean to chastise it.

K. JOHN. Alack, thou dost usurp authority.

K. PHI. Excuse; it is to beat usurping down.

ELI. Who is it thou dost call usurper, France? 120

CONST. Let me make answer; thy usurping son.

ELI. Out, insolent! thy bastard shall be king,
 That thou mayst be a queen, and check the world!

CONST. My bed was ever to thy son as true
 As thine was to thy husband; and this boy
 Liker in feature to his father Geoffrey
 Than thou and John in manners; being as like
 As rain to water, or devil to his dam.
 My boy a bastard! By my soul, I think
 His father never was so true begot: 130
 It cannot be, an if thou wert his mother.

ELI. There's a good mother, boy, that blots thy
 father.

CONST. There's a good grandam, boy, that would
 blot thee.

AUST. Peace!

114 *blots and stains*] an allusion to the heraldic signs of bastardy.

"Blot" is used thus (as a verb) in lines 132-133, *infra*. See also
 III, i, 45, *infra*: "Full of unpleasing *blots* and sightless *stains*."

123 *a queen, and check the world*] an allusion to the queen's check in
 the game of chess.

131 *an if thou wert his mother*] John's mother, Queen Elinor, had been
 divorced for infidelity by her first husband Louis VII of France,
 before she married Henry II of England.

KING JOHN

BAST. Hear the crier.

AUST. What the devil art thou?

BAST. One that will play the devil, sir, with
you,

An a' may catch your hide and you alone:

You are the hare of whom the proverb goes,

Whose valour plucks dead lions by the beard:

I'll smoke your skin-coat, an I catch you right;

Sirrah, look to 't; i' faith, I will, i' faith.

140

BLANCH. O, well did he become that lion's robe
That did disrobe the lion of that robe!

BAST. It lies as sightly on the back of him

As great Alcides' shows upon an ass:

But, ass, I'll take that burthen from your back,

Or lay on that shall make your shoulders crack.

AUST. What cracker is this same that deafs our
ears

134 *Hear the crier*] The crier was the official who proclaimed silence in courts of justice. Austria has just cried "Peace!" (line 134).

136 *your hide and you*] An allusion to the tradition that the Duke of Austria robbed his prisoner Richard I of a lion's hide, which the duke thenceforth himself wore.

137-138 *the hare . . . the beard*] The familiar proverb is thus cited in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, I, ii, 172. "So hares may pull dead lions by the beard."

139 *smoke your skin-coat*] beat your skin soundly.

144 *great Alcides'*] great Hercules' robe (made out of the skin of the Nemean lion).

shows] Theobald's emendation of the ambiguous spelling *shoos* of the First Folio.

147 *cracker*] braggart. The verb "crack," to boast, is often found in Elizabethan literature.

With this abundance of superfluous breath?
King Philip, determine what we shall do straight.

K. PHI. Women and fools, break off your conference.

King John, this is the very sum of all; 151

England and Ireland, Anjou, Touraine, Maine,

In right of Arthur do I claim of thee:

Wilt thou resign them and lay down thy arms?

K. JOHN. My life as soon: I do defy thee, France.

Arthur of Bretagne, yield thee to my hand;

And out of my dear love I'll give thee more

Than e'er the coward hand of France can win:

Submit thee, boy.

ELI. Come to thy grandam, child.

CONST. Do, child, go to it grandam, child; 160

Give grandam kingdom, and it grandam will

Give it a plum, a cherry, and a fig:

There's a good grandam.

ARTH. Good my mother, peace!

I would that I were low laid in my grave:

I am not worth this coil that's made for me.

ELI. His mother shames him so, poor boy, he weeps.

149 *King Philip*] Theobald's essential emendation of the Folio reading
King Lewis. Austria is clearly appealing to the French king, not
to his son, to whom the Folios wrongly assign the next speech.

152 *Anjou*] Theobald's emendation of the Folios' *Angiers*. Cf. line
487, *infra*.

160 *it grandam*] *its* grandam. Constance mimics the baby-language of
the grandmother; but "it" was occasionally used as a possessive
pronoun in serious speech. "His" was in Elizabethan English the
ordinary form of "its," which is rarely met with.

165 *coil*] fuss, commotion.

CONST. Now shame upon you, whether she does or no !
His grandam's wrongs, and not his mother's shames,
Draws those heaven-moving pearls from his poor eyes,
Which heaven shall take in nature of a fee ; 170
Ay, with these crystal beads heaven shall be bribed
To do him justice and revenge on you.

ELI. Thou monstrous slanderer of heaven and earth !

CONST. Thou monstrous injurer of heaven and earth !
Call not me slanderer ; thou and thine usurp
The dominations, royalties and rights
Of this oppressed boy : this is thy eld'st son's son,
Infortunate in nothing but in thee :
Thy sins are visited in this poor child ;
The canon of the law is laid on him, 180
Being but the second generation
Removed from thy sin-conceiving womb.

K. JOHN. Bedlam, have done.

CONST. I have but this to say,
That he is not only plagued for her sin,
But God hath made her sin and her the plague
On this removed issue, plagued for her
And with her plague ; her sin his injury,
Her injury the beadle to her sin,

168 *His grandam's wrongs*] Wrongs done by his grandam.

180 *The canon of the law*] The sins of fathers shall be visited on the children "unto the third and fourth generation" according to the Jewish law recorded in Exodus xx, 5.

189 *Bedlam*] woman of the madhouse, i. e., Bedlam or Bethlehem hospital.

185-189 *But God hath made . . . of this child*] The punctuation of this difficult passage in the First Folio is hopeless. With the revised

All punish'd in the person of this child,
And all for her; a plague upon her!

190

ELI. Thou unadvised scold, I can produce
A will that bars the title of thy son.

CONST. Ay, who doubts that? a will! a wicked will;
A woman's will; a canker'd grandam's will!

K. PHI. Peace, lady! pause, or be more temperate:
It ill beseems this presence to cry aim
To these ill-tuned repetitions.

Some trumpet summon hither to the walls
These men of Angiers: let us hear them speak
Whose title they admit, Arthur's or John's.

200

Trumpet sounds. Enter certain CITIZENS upon the walls

FIRST CIT. Who is it that hath warn'd us to the
walls?

K. PHI. 'T is France, for England.

K. JOHN. England, for itself.

You men of Angiers, and my loving subjects, —

punctuation adopted here the meaning seems to be: "God hath made her sin and herself alike a curse on this distant kinsman of hers, who is afflicted both by the punishment allotted her, and also by the punishment which she inflicts on him; her sin brings Arthur injury; her injurious conduct inflicts on the boy (like a beadle who punishes youthful offenders) the punishment incurred by her offence. Arthur is in every way her scapegoat.

191 *unadvised*] rash. Cf. line 45, *supra*, and V, ii, 132, *infra*.

196 *cry aim*] give encouragement; a term in archery applied to those who stand by the archer bidding him to what point to direct his aim. Cf. *M. Wives*, III, ii, 37: "to these violent proceedings all my neighbours shall *cry aim*."

K. PHI. You loving men of Angiers, Arthur's subjects,
Our trumpet call'd you to this gentle parle, —

K. JOHN. For our advantage; therefore hear us first.
These flags of France, that are advanced here
Before the eye and prospect of your town,
Have hither march'd to your endamagement:
The cannons have their bowels full of wrath, 210
And ready mounted are they to spit forth
Their iron indignation 'gainst your walls:
All preparation for a bloody siege
And merciless proceeding by these French
Confronts your city's eyes, your winking gates;
And but for our approach those sleeping stones,
That as a waist doth girdle you about,
By the compulsion of their ordinance
By this time from their fixed beds of lime
Had been dishabited, and wide havoc made 220
For bloody power to rush upon your peace.
But on the sight of us your lawful king,
Who painfully with much expedient march
Have brought a countercheck before your gates,
To save unscratch'd your city's threatened cheeks,
Behold, the French amazed vouchsafe a parle;
And now, instead of bullets wrapp'd in fire,

209 *endamagement*] loss. Shakespeare only uses the word here, but the verb "to endamage" (i. e., to injure) is found in *Two Gent.* III, ii, 43, and *1 Hen. VI*, II, i, 77.

215 *winking*] closed (in sleep).

218 *ordinance*] ordnance, artillery.

220 *dishabited*] dislodged.

223 *expedient*] expeditious, rapid. Cf. line 60, *supra*.

To make a shaking fever in your walls,
 They shoot but calm words folded up in smoke,
 To make a faithless error in your ears: 230
 Which trust accordingly, kind citizens,
 And let us in, your king, whose labour'd spirits,
 Forwearied in this action of swift speed,
 Crave harbourage within your city walls.

K. PH. When I have said, make answer to us
 both.

Lo, in this right hand, whose protection
 Is most divinely vow'd upon the right
 Of him it holds, stands young Plantagenet,
 Son to the elder brother of this man,
 And king o'er him and all that he enjoys: 240
 For this down-trodden equity, we tread
 In warlike march these greens before your town,
 Being no further enemy to you
 Than the constraint of hospitable zeal
 In the relief of this oppressed child
 Religiously provokes. Be pleased then
 To pay that duty which you truly owe
 To him that owes it, namely this young prince:
 And then our arms, like to a muzzled bear,

229 *words folded up in smoke*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1027: "This helpless *smoke*
of words."

230 *To make . . . in your ears*] To cause you to be deceived, to lead
 you into an error of disloyalty.

233 *Forwearied*] Outwearied, worn out.

242 *greens*] meadows.

247-248 *owe . . . owes*] "owe" is first used here in its ordinary modern
 sense, and then in its old sense of "own."

Save in aspect, hath all offence seal'd up; 250
 Our cannons' malice vainly shall be spent
 Against the invulnerable clouds of heaven;
 And with a blessed and unvex'd retire,
 With unhack'd swords and helmets all unbruised,
 We will bear home that lusty blood again,
 Which here we came to spout against your town,
 And leave your children, wives and you in peace.
 But if you fondly pass our proffer'd offer,
 'T is not the roundure of your old-faced walls
 Can hide you from our messengers of war, 260
 Though all these English and their discipline
 Were harbour'd in their rude circumference.
 Then tell us, shall your city call us lord,
 In that behalf which we have challenged it?
 Or shall we give the signal to our rage
 And stalk in blood to our possession?

FIRST CIT. In brief, we are the king of England's
 subjects:

For him, and in his right, we hold this town.

K. JOHN. Acknowledge then the king, and let me in.

FIRST CIT. That can we not; but he that proves the
 king, 270

To him will we prove loyal: till that time
 Have we ramm'd up our gates against the world.

253 *retire*] withdrawal, retreat. Cf. line 326, *infra*.

259 *roundure*] round, circle. A French word which the Folios spell
 • *rounder*; also used by Shakespeare in *Sonnet*, xxi, 8: "That
 heaven's air in this huge *rondure* hems."

272 *ramm'd up*] closed by means of wedges driven into the apertures by
 battering-rams.

K. JOHN. Doth not the crown of England prove the
king?

And if not that, I bring you witnesses,
Twice fifteen thousand hearts of England's breed, —

BAST. Bastards, and else.

K. JOHN. To verify our title with their lives.

K. PHI. As many and as well-born bloods as those —

BAST. Some bastards too.

K. PHI. Stand in his face to contradict his claim. 280

FIRST CIT. Till you compound whose right is wor-
thiest,

We for the worthiest hold the right from both.

K. JOHN. Then God forgive the sin of all those souls
That to their everlasting residence,
Before the dew of evening fall, shall fleet,
In dreadful trial of our kingdom's king!

K. PHI. Amen, amen! Mount, chevaliers! to arms!

BAST. Saint George, that swinged the dragon, and
e'er since

Sits on his horse back at mine hostess' door,
Teach us some fence! [*To Aust.*] Sirrah, were I at home,
At your den, sirrah, with your lioness, 291
I would set an ox-head to your lion's hide,
And make a monster of you.

AUST. Peace! no more.

BAST. O, tremble, for you hear the lion roar.

278 *bloods*] men of spirit, gallants. Cf. 461, *infra*: "this lusty blood."

288-289 *Saint George . . . at mine hostess' door*] St. George and the
dragon was a very common tavern sign.

293 *make a monster of you*] Cf. *Oth.*, IV, i, 62: "A horned man's a
monster."

K. JOHN. Up higher to the plain; where we'll set
forth

In best appointment all our regiments.

BAST. Speed then, to take advantage of the field.

K. PHI. It shall be so; and at the other hill
Command the rest to stand. God and our right!

[*Exeunt.*]

*Here after excursions, enter the Herald of France, with trumpets,
to the gates*

F. HER. You men of Angiers, open wide your gates,
And let young Arthur, Duke of Bretagne, in, 301
Who by the hand of France this day hath made
Much work for tears in many an English mother,
Whose sons lie scattered on the bleeding ground:
Many a widow's husband grovelling lies,
Coldly embracing the discoloured earth;
And victory, with little loss, doth play
Upon the dancing banners of the French,
Who are at hand, triumphantly display'd,
To enter conquerors, and to proclaim 310
Arthur of Bretagne England's king and yours.

Enter English Herald, with trumpet

E. HER. Rejoice, you men of Angiers, ring your bells;
King John, your king and England's, doth approach,
Commander of this hot malicious day:

299 (Stage direction) *Here after excursions*] Most editors begin a new scene here, but the initial word *Here* suggests that there is no division.

314 *hot*] hotly (or fiercely) contested (or fought).

Strength match'd with strength, and power confronted
power: 330

Both are alike; and both alike we like.
One must prove greatest: while they weigh so even,
We hold our town for neither, yet for both.

Re-enter the two KINGS, with their powers, severally

K. JOHN. France, hast thou yet more blood to cast
away?

Say, shall the current of our right run on?
Whose passage, vex'd with thy impediment,
Shall leave his native channel, and o'erswell
With course disturb'd even thy confining shores,
Unless thou let his silver water keep
A peaceful progress to the ocean. 340

K. PHI. England, thou hast not saved one drop of
blood,

In this hot trial, more than we of France;
Rather, lost more. And by this hard I swear,
That sways the earth this climate overlooks,
Before we will lay down our just-borne arms,
We'll put thee down, 'gainst whom these arms we bear,
Or add a royal number to the dead,
Gracing the scroll that tells of this war's loss
With slaughter coupled to the name of kings.

335 *run*] Thus the second and later Folios. The First Folio reads
rome (i. e., *roam*).

344 *this climate overlooks*] which the region of the heavens immediately
above us overlooks.

347 *add a royal number to the dead*] add a king to the number of the
dead.

BAST. Ha, majesty! how high thy glory towers, 350
 When the rich blood of kings is set on fire!
 O, now doth Death line his dead chaps with steel;
 The swords of soldiers are his teeth, his fangs;
 And now he feasts, mousing the flesh of men,
 In undetermined differences of kings.
 Why stand these royal fronts amazed thus?
 Cry "havoc!" kings; back to the stained field,
 You equal potents, fiery kindled spirits!
 Then let confusion of one part confirm 359

The other's peace; till then, blows, blood, and death!

K. JOHN. Whose party do the townsmen yet admit?

K. PHI. Speak, citizens, for England; who's your king?

FIRST CIT. The king of England, when we know the king.

K. PHI. Know him in us, that here hold up his right.

K. JOHN. In us, that are our own great deputy,

And in possession of our person here,

Lord of our presence Angiers, and of you.

FIRST CIT. A greater power than we denies all this;

354 *mousing*] devouring (as the cat eats the mouse).

356 *fronts*] brows

357 Cry "*havoc*"!] The cry which gave the signal for "no quarter." Cf.

Jul. Cæsar, I, i, 274: "Cry '*Havoc*' and let slip the dogs of war."

358 *equal potents*] evenly matched potentates, powers.

359 *confusion of one part*] ruin of one side.

367 *Lord of our presence*] Lord of our person. Cf. I, i, 137, *supra*: "Lord of thy presence."

368 FIRST CIT.] The Folios assign this speech to FRANCE. Capell made the change adopted here.

A greater power] Providence.

And till it be undoubted, we do lock
 Our former scruple in our strong-barr'd gates; 370
 King'd of our fears, until our fears, resolved,
 Be by some certain king purged and deposed.

BAST. By heaven, these scroyles of Angiers flout you,
 kings,

And stand securely on their battlements,
 As in a theatre, whence they gape and point
 At your industrious scenes and acts of death.
 Your royal presences be ruled by me:
 Do like the mutines of Jerusalem,
 Be friends awhile and both conjointly bend
 Your sharpest deeds of malice on this town: 380
 By east and west let France and England mount
 Their battering cannon charged to the mouths,
 Till their soul-fearing clamours have brawl'd down
 The flinty ribs of this contemptuous city:
 I'd play incessantly upon these jades,
 Even till unfenced desolation
 Leave them as naked as the vulgar air.
 That done, dissever your united strengths,

371 *King'd of our fears*] Ruled by our fears. The Folios read, *Kings of our fears*, which Tyrwhitt ingeniously changed into the form now generally accepted. For the use of "king'd" cf. *Hen. V.*, II, iv, 26. "She [*i. e.*, England] is so idly *king'd*."

373 *scroyles*] scrofulous fellows; from the French "*escrouelles*" (*i. e.*, vermin).

378 *the mutines of Jerusalem*] The mutineers of Jerusalem. A reference to two Jewish chiefs — at the head of two warring factions — who sank their differences to unite their forces against Titus when he besieged Jerusalem. The incident is related by Josephus.

383 *soul-fearing*] soul-appalling.

385 *jades*] vicious creatures; applied to vicious horses and mares alike.

And part your mingled colours once again;
Turn face to face and bloody point to point; 390
Then, in a moment, Fortune shall cull forth
Out of one side her happy minion,
To whom in favour she shall give the day,
And kiss him with a glorious victory.
How like you this wild counsel, mighty states?
Smacks it not something of the policy?

K. JOHN. Now, by the sky that hangs above our heads,
I like it well. France, shall we knit our powers
And lay this Angiers even with the ground;
Then after fight who shall be king of it? 400

BAST. An if thou hast the mettle of a king,
Being wrong'd as we are by this peevish town,
Turn thou the mouth of thy artillery,
As we will ours, against these saucy walls;
And when that we have dash'd them to the ground,
Why then defy each other, and pell-mell
Make work upon ourselves, for heaven or hell.

K. PHI. Let it be so. Say, where will you assault?

K. JOHN. We from the west will send destruction
Into this city's bosom. 410

AUST. I from the north.

K. PHI. Our thunder from the south
Shall rain their drift of bullets on this town.

BAST. O prudent discipline! From north to south:

392 *minion*] favourite.

395 *mighty states*] mighty rulers of states, princes.

402 *peevish*] wayward, petulant.

411-412 *Our thunder . . . drift*] Our thundering cannon shall hurl their driving shower.

Austria and France shoot in each other's mouth:

I'll stir them to it. Come, away, away!

FIRST CIT. Hear us, great kings: vouchsafe awhile
to stay,

And I shall show you peace and fair-faced league;

Win you this city without stroke or wound;

Rescue those breathing lives to die in beds,

That here come sacrifices for the field:

420

Persever not, but hear me, mighty kings.

K. JOHN. Speak on with favour; we are bent to hear.

FIRST CIT. That daughter there of Spain, the Lady
Blanch,

Is niece to England: look upon the years

Of Lewis the Dauphin and that lovely maid:

If lusty love should go in quest of beauty,

Where should he find it fairer than in Blanch?

If zealous love should go in search of virtue,

Where should he find it purer than in Blanch?

If love ambitious sought a match of birth,

430

Whose veins bound richer blood than Lady Blanch?

Such as she is, in beauty, virtue, birth,

Is the young Dauphin every way complete:

If not complete of, say he is not she;

And she again wants nothing, to name want,

424 *niece*] Collier's sound emendation of the Folios' reading *neere* or *neer*. The Lady Blanch is rightly described as King John's niece, line 521, *infra*, although she is called his mother Elinor's niece, line 64, *supra* (see note), and line 469, *infra*.

434 *complete of*] full of (these virtues).

435-436 *to name want . . . she is not he*] to use so inappropriate a word as "want" in this connection, unless we treat it as a want that she is not he.

If want it be not that she is not he:
 He is the half part of a blessed man,
 Left to be finished by such as she;
 And she a fair divided excellence,
 Whose fulness of perfection lies in him. 440
 O, two such silver currents, when they join,
 Do glorify the banks that bound them in;
 And two such shores to two such streams made one,
 Two such controlling bounds shall you be, kings,
 To these two princes, if you marry them.
 This union shall do more than battery can
 To our fast-closed gates; for at this match,
 With swifter spleen than powder can enforce,
 The mouth of passage shall we fling wide ope,
 And give you entrance: but without this match, 450
 The sea enraged is not half so deaf,
 Lions more confident, mountains and rocks
 More free from motion, no, not Death himself
 In mortal fury half so peremptory,
 As we to keep this city.

BAST. Here's a stay
 That shakes the rotten carcass of old Death
 Out of his rags! Here's a large mouth, indeed,
 That spits forth death and mountains, rocks and seas,
 Talks as familiarly of roaring lions
 As maids of thirteen do of puppy-dogs! 460

448 *spleen*] eagerness, impetuous haste.

452-453 *Lions more confident . . . More free*] The negative of line 451 is implied in both clauses, *i. e.*, Lions are *not* more confident, etc.

455 *a stay*] a barrier, an obstacle, a check. Cf. Churchyard, *Siege of Leethe*, 1575: "This *staye* of warre made many men to muse."

What cannoneer begot this lusty blood?
 He speaks plain cannon fire, and smoke and bounce;
 He gives the bastinado with his tongue:
 Our ears are cudgell'd; not a word of his
 But buffets better than a fist of France:
 Zounds! I was never so bethump'd with words
 Since I first call'd my brother's father dad.

ELI. Son, list to this conjunction, make this match;
 Give with our niece a dowry large enough:
 For by this knot thou shalt so surely tie 470
 Thy now unsured assurance to the crown,
 That yon green boy shall have no sun to ripe
 The bloom that promiseth a mighty fruit.
 I see a yielding in the looks of France;
 Mark, how they whisper: urge them while their souls
 Are capable of this ambition,
 Lest zeal, now melted by the windy breath
 Of soft petitions, pity and remorse,
 Cool and congeal again to what it was.

461 *blood*] gallant, cf. line 278, *supra*: "well-born bloods."

462 *He speaks plain cannon fire*] Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 386: "I will speak daggers." For the construction, cf. *As you like it*, III, ii, 199, and note.
bounce] report or bang of a gun.

463 *the bastinado*] a sound thrashing.

468 *conjunction*] matrimonial union.

471 *unsured*] uncertain.

477-479 *zeal . . . Cool and congeal again*] The present zeal (in the previously hard heart of King Philip) is compared to melted ice, and the fear is expressed that it may freeze to ice again. Cf. III, iv, 149-

• 150, *infra*: "This act . . . shall cool the hearts Of all the people and freeze up their zeal."

478 *remorse*] compassion. Cf. IV, iii, 50 and 110, *infra*.

FIRST CIT. Why answer not the double majesties 480
This friendly treaty of our threaten'd town?

K. PHI. Speak England first, that hath been forward
• first

To speak unto this city: what say you?

K. JOHN. If that the Dauphin there, thy princely
son,

Can in this book of beauty read "I love,"
Her dowry shall weigh equal with a queen:
For Anjou, and fair Touraine, Maine, Poitiers,
And all that we upon this side the sea,
Except this city now by us besieged,
Find liable to our crown and dignity, 490
Shall gild her bridal bed, and make her rich
In titles, honours and promotions,
As she in beauty, education, blood,
Holds hand with any princess of the world.

K. PHI. What say'st thou, boy? look in the lady's
face.

LEW. I do, my lord; and in her eye I find
A wonder, or a wondrous miracle,
The shadow of myself form'd in her eye;
Which, being but the shadow of your son,
Becomes a sun and makes your son a shadow: 500
I do protest I never loved myself
Till now infixed I beheld myself
Drawn in the flattering table of her eye.

[*Whispers with Blanch.*]

487 *Anjou*] The Folios wrongly read *Angiers*. Cf. line 152, *supra*.

503 *table*] canvas or board (on which a picture is painted).

BAST. Drawn in the flattering table of her eye!

Hang'd in the frowning wrinkle of her brow!
And quarter'd in her heart! he doth espy

Himself love's traitor: this is pity now,
That, hang'd and drawn and quarter'd there should be,
In such a love so vile a lout as he.

BLANCH. My uncle's will in this respect is mine: 510
If he see aught in you that makes him like,
That any thing he sees, which moves his liking,
I can with ease translate it to my will;
Or if you will, to speak more properly,
I will enforce it easily to my love.
Further I will not flatter you, my lord,
That all I see in you is worthy love,
Than this; that nothing do I see in you,
Though churlish thoughts themselves should be your
judge,

That I can find should merit any hate. 520

K. JOHN. What say these young ones? What say
you, my niece?

BLANCH. That she is bound in honour still to do
What you in wisdom still vouchsafe to say.

K. JOHN. Speak then, prince Dauphin; can you love
this lady?

LEW. Nay, ask me if I can refrain from love;
For I do love her most unfeignedly.

504-509 Drawn . . . as he] This speech is in the six-line stanza of *Venus and Adonis*. Cf. *L. L. L.*, I, i, 147-158, and *Rom. and Jul.*, I, ii, 45-50.

504-506 Drawn . . . Hang'd . . . quarter'd] A reference to the three stages of punishment inflicted on traitors who were first drawn to the gallows on a hurdle, then hanged, then hewn into quarters.

K. JOHN. Then do I give Volquessen, Touraine,
Maine,
Poitiers, and Anjou, these five provinces,
With her to thee; and this addition more,
Full thirty thousand marks of English coin. 530
Philip of France, if thou be pleased withal,
Command thy son and daughter to join hands.

K. PHI. It likes us well; young princes, close your
hands.

AUST. And your lips too; for I am well assured
That I did so when I was first assured.

K. PHI. Now, citizens of Angiers, ope your gates,
Let in that amity which you have made;
For at Saint Mary's chapel presently
The rites of marriage shall be solemnized.
Is not the Lady Constance in this troop? 540
I know she is not, for this match made up
Her presence would have interrupted much:
Where is she and her son? tell me, who knows.

LEW. She is sad and passionate at your highness' tent.

K. PHI. And, by my faith, this league that we have
made
Will give her sadness very little cure.
Brother of England, how may we content
This widow lady? In her right we came;
Which we, God knows, have turn'd another way,
To our own vantage.

527 *Volquessen*] The ancient name (*Pagus Velocessinus*) of the Vexin,
the district round Rouen.

535 *first assured*] first affianced, betrothed.

544 *passionate*] agitated (by passion).

KING JOHN

ACT II

K. JOHN. We will heal up all; 550
 For we'll create young Arthur Duke of Bretagne
 And Earl of Richmond; and this rich fair town
 We make him lord of. Call the Lady Constance;
 Some speedy messenger bid her repair
 To our solemnity: I trust we shall,
 If not fill up the measure of her will,
 Yet in some measure satisfy her so
 That we shall stop her exclamation.
 Go we, as well as haste will suffer us,
 To this unlook'd for, unprepared pomp. 560

[*Exeunt all but the Bastard.*]

BAST. Mad world! mad kings! mad composition!
 John, to stop Arthur's title in the whole,
 Hath willingly departed with a part:
 And France, whose armour conscience buckled on,
 Whom zeal and charity brought to the field
 As God's own soldier, rounded in the ear
 With that same purpose-changer, that sly devil,
 That broker, that still breaks the pate of faith,
 That daily break-vow, he that wins of all,
 Of kings, of beggars, old men, young men, maids, 570
 Who, having no external thing to lose
 But the word "maid," cheats the poor maid of that,

561 *composition*] compact, treaty.

563 *departed*] parted.

566 *rounded*] whispered. Cf. *Wind. Tale*, I, ii, 217: "whispering, rounding."

571-572 *having* . . . "maid"] this is an absolute clause, with an implied subject "they" (i. e., "maids") which governs "having."

That smooth-faced gentleman, tickling Commodity,
 Commodity, the bias of the world,
 The world, who of itself is peised well.
 Made to run even upon even ground,
 Till this advantage, this vile-drawing bias,
 This sway of motion, this Commodity,
 Makes it take head from all indifferency,
 From all direction, purpose, course, intent: 580
 And this same bias, this Commodity,
 This bawd, this broker, this all-changing word,
 Clapp'd on the outward eye of fickle France,
 Hath drawn him from his own determined aid,
 From a resolved and honourable war,
 To a most base and vile-concluded peace.
 And why rail I on this Commodity?
 But for because he hath not woo'd me yet:
 Not that I have the power to clutch my hand,
 When his fair angels would salute my palm; 590

573 *tickling . . . Commodity*] flattering, cajoling, . . . Self-interest or Expediency.

574 *the bias*] Literally the piece of lead fixed to a bowl to make it swerve when played in the game. "Commodity" is here defined as an influence making the world swerve from its right course.

575 *who . . . is peised*] which is poised or balanced.

579 *Makes it take . . . indifferency*] Makes it deviate altogether from the direction of impartiality or judicial equity.

582 *broker*] go-between, pimp.

584 *his own determined aid*] the aid he had determined to give.

589 *clutch*] clench, shut.

590 *angels*] gold coins, worth about ten shillings apiece. Cf. III, iii, 8, *infra*.

KING JOHN

ACT II

But for my hand, as unattempted yet,
Like a poor beggar, railleth on the rich,
Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail
And say there is no sin but to be rich;
And being rich, my virtue then shall be
To say there is no vice but beggary.
Since kings break faith upon commodity,
Gain, be my lord, for I will worship thee.

[Exit.]



ACT THIRD — SCENE I

THE FRENCH KING'S PAVILION

Enter CONSTANCE, ARTHUR, and SALISBURY

CONSTANCE



ONE TO BE MARRIED!

gone to swear a peace!

False blood to false blood join'd!

gone to be friends!

Shall Lewis have Blanch, and
Blanch those provinces?

It is not so; thou hast misspoke,
misheard;

Be well advised, tell o'er thy tale
again:

It cannot be; thou dost but say
't is so:

I trust I may not trust thee; for
thy word

Is but the vain breath of a common man:

Believe me, I do not believe thee, man;

1 *Gone to be married*] Theobald first made Act III begin here. The Folios defer the opening till line 75, connecting the preceding lines with Act II.

I have a king's oath to the contrary. 10
Thou shalt be punish'd for thus frightening me,
For I am sick and capable of fears,
Oppress'd with wrongs and therefore full of fears,
A widow, husbandless, subject to fears,
A woman, naturally born to fears;
And though thou now confess thou didst but jest,
With my vex'd spirits I cannot take a truce,
But they will quake and tremble all this day.
What dost thou mean by shaking of thy head?
Why dost thou look so sadly on my son? 20
What means that hand upon that breast of thine?
Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,
Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds?
Be these sad signs confirmers of thy words?
Then speak again; not all thy former tale,
But this one word, whether thy tale be true.

SAL. As true as I believe you think them false
That give you cause to prove my saying true.

CONST. O, if thou teach me to believe this sorrow,
Teach thou this sorrow how to make me die, 30
And let belief and life encounter so
As doth the fury of two desperate men

14 *A widow*] As a matter of history, Constance was at this period wife of a third husband, Guy, Count of Thouars. After the death of Prince Arthur's father, Geoffrey (her first husband), she married, secondly, Randolph de Blundeville, Earl of Chester, whom she divorced.

22 *lamentable rheum*] tears of sorrow or lamentation.

24 *these sad signs*] the shaking of the head, the laying of the hand on the breast, the tearful eye, to which the speaker has just drawn attention.

Which in the very meeting fall and die.

Lewis marry Blanch! O boy, then where art thou?

France friend with England, what becomes of me?

Fellow, be gone: I cannot brook thy sight:

This news hath made thee a most ugly man.

SAL. What other harm have I, good lady, done,

But spoke the harm that is by others done?

CONST. Which harm within itself so heinous is 40

As it makes harmful all that speak of it.

ARTH. I do beseech you, madam, be content.

CONST. If thou, that bid'st me be content, wert grim,

Ugly and slanderous to thy mother's womb,

Full of unpleasing blots and sightless stains,

Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, prodigious,

Patch'd with foul moles and eye-offending marks,

I would not care, I then would be content,

For then I should not love thee, no, nor thou

Become thy great birth nor deserve a crown. 50

But thou art fair, and at thy birth, dear boy,

Nature and Fortune join'd to make thee great:

Of Nature's gifts thou mayst with lilies boast

And with the half-blown rose. But Fortune, O,

She is corrupted, changed and won from thee;

She adulterates hourly with thine uncle John,

And with her golden hand hath pluck'd on France

To tread down fair respect of sovereignty,

45 *blots . . . stains*] Cf. II, i, 114, *supra*: "the blots and stains of right."

"Sightless" means "unsightly."

46 *swart, prodigious*] ill-favouredly dark, monstrously misshapen. Cf. line

91, *infra*, where "prodigiously" suggests "by misshapen abortions."

56 *adulterates*] commits adultery.

KING JOHN

ACT III

And made his majesty the bawd to theirs.
 France is a bawd to Fortune and King John, 60
 That strumpet Fortune, that usurping John!
 Tell me, thou fellow, is not France forsworn?
 Envenom him with words, or get thee gone,
 And leave those woes alone which I alone
 Am bound to under-bear.

SAL. Pardon me, madam,
 I may not go without you to the kings.

CONST. Thou mayst, thou shalt; I will not go with
 thee:

I will instruct my sorrows to be proud;
 For grief is proud and makes his owner stoop.
 To me and to the state of my great grief 70
 Let kings assemble; for my grief's so great
 That no supporter but the huge firm earth
 Can hold it up: here I and sorrows sit;
 Here is my throne, bid kings come bow to it.

[*Sets herself on the ground.*]

*Enter KING JOHN, KING PHILIP, LEWIS, BLANCH, ELINOR,
 the BASTARD, AUSTRIA, and Attendants*

K. PHI. 'T is true, fair daughter; and this blessed day
 Ever in France shall be kept festival:

63 *Envenom*] Poison.

69 *stoop*] Thus the Folios. Hanmer wrongly substituted *stout*. Con-
 stance is too agitated to make her imagery quite consistent. She
 means that she is prostrated to the ground by the weight of her
 grief: she will not obey the summons of the kings; they must come
 to her and bow down before her who lies prone on the earth.

75 *'T is true*] Here the Folios begin Act III. See line 1, *supra*, and note.

To solemnize this day the glorious sun
 Stays in his course and plays the alchemist,
 Turning with spendour of his precious eye
 The meagre cloddy earth to glittering gold: 80
 The yearly course that brings this day about
 Shall never see it but a holiday.

CONST. A wicked day, and not a holy day! [*Rising.*
 What hath this day deserved? what hath it done,
 That it in golden letters should be set
 Among the high tides in the calendar?
 Nay, rather turn this day out of the week,
 This day of shame, oppression, perjury.
 Or, if it must stand still, let wives with child,
 Pray that their burthens may not fall this day, 90
 Lest that their hopes prodigiously be cross'd:
 But on this day let seamen fear no wreck;
 No bargains break that are not this day made:
 This day, all things begun come to ill end,
 Yea, faith itself to hollow falsehood change!

K. PHI. By heaven, lady, you shall have no cause
 To curse the fair proceedings of this day:
 Have I not pawn'd to you my majesty?

CONST. You have beguiled me with a counterfeit

77-78 *the glorious sun . . . alchemist*] Cf. *Sonnet xxxiii*, 1-4: "a glorious morning . . . Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."

86 *high tides*] days of high festivals, solemn seasons.

91 *prodigiously be cross'd*] be frustrated by mishapen abortions: cf. line 46, "prodigious," i. e., monstrously mishapen.

92 *But on this day*] Except on this day, on this day only.

90 *counterfeit*] base coin.

Resembling majesty, which, being touch'd and tried, 100
 Proves valueless: you are forsworn, forsworn;
 You came in arms to spill mine enemies' blood,
 But now in arms you strengthen it with yours:
 The grappling vigour and rough frown of war
 Is cold in amity and painted peace,
 And our oppression hath made up this league.
 Arm, arm, you heavens, against these perjured kings!
 A widow cries; be husband to me, heavens!
 Let not the hours of this ungodly day
 Wear out the day in peace; but, ere sunset, 110
 Set armed discord 'twixt these perjured kings!
 Hear me, O, hear me!

AUST. Lady Constance, peace!

CONST. War! war! no peace! peace is to me a war.
 O Lymoges! O Austria! thou dost shame
 That bloody spoil: thou slave, thou wretch, thou coward!
 Thou little valiant, great in villany!
 Thou ever strong upon the stronger side!
 Thou Fortune's champion, that dost never fight
 But when her humorous ladyship is by
 To teach thee safety! thou art perjured too, 120
 And soothest up greatness. What a fool art thou,

100 *touch'd and tried*] tested by the touchstone.

103 *now in arms . . . with yours*] now in embraces you support my enemies with your blood. There is an obvious quibble on the word "arms."

105 *painted peace*] pretence of peace.

114 *O Lymoges! O Austria!*] Titles of two quite different persons, who are confused together in the old play. See II, i, 5, *supra*, and note.

121 *soothest up*] flatterest up.

A ramping fool, to brag and stamp and swear
 Upon my party! Thou cold-blooded slave,
 Hast thou not spoke like thunder on my side,
 Been sworn 'my soldier, bidding me depend
 Upon thy stars, thy fortune and thy strength,
 And dost thou now fall over to my foes?
 Thou wear a lion's hide! doff it for shame,
 And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs. 129

AUST. O, that a man should speak those words to me!

BAST. And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

AUST. Thou darest not say so, villain, for thy life.

BAST. And hang a calf's-skin on those recreant limbs.

K. JOHN. We like not this; thou dost forget thyself.

Enter PANDULPH

K. PHI. Here comes the holy legate of the pope.

PAND. Hail, you anointed deputies of heaven!
 To thee, King John, my holy errand is.
 I Pandulph, of fair Milan cardinal,
 And from Pope Innocent the legate here,
 Do in his name religiously demand 140
 Why thou against the church, our holy mother,
 So wilfully dost spurn; and force perforce
 Keep Stephen Langton, chosen archbishop
 Of Canterbury, from that holy see:

122 *ramping*] gesticulating with violence; used of rearing horses.

123 *Upon my party*] Against my side.

127 *fall over*] go over, revolt. Cf. line 320, *infra*: "will fall from thee."

129 *a calf's-skin*] a fool's coat.

142 *force perforce*] willy-nilly, in despite of everything.

This, in our foresaid holy father's name,
Pope Innocent, I do demand of thee.

K. JOHN. What earthy name to interrogatories
Can task the free breath of a sacred king?
Thou canst not, cardinal, devise a name
So slight, unworthy and ridiculous, 150
To charge me to an answer, as the pope.
Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England
Add thus much more, that no Italian priest
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;
But as we, under heaven, are supreme head,
So under Him that great supremacy,
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,
Without the assistance of a mortal hand.
So tell the pope, all reverence set apart
To him and his usurp'd authority. 160

K. PHIL. Brother of England, you blaspheme in
this.

K. JOHN. Though you and all the kings of Christen-
dom
Are led so grossly by this meddling priest,
Dreading the curse that money may buy out;
And by the merit of vile gold, dross, dust,
Purchase corrupted pardon of a man,

147-148 *What earthly name . . . sacred king*] What earthly name or power can coerce or compel the free speech of a sacred king to reply to interrogatories (i. e., formal questions in legal procedure * which have to be answered on oath). Theobald substituted *task* for the Folio reading *taste*.

154 *Shall tithe or toll*] Shall take tithe or levy tax.

159-160 *all reverence . . . To him*] all respect for him being revoked.

Who in that sale sells pardon from himself,
 Though you and all the rest so grossly led
 This juggling witchcraft with revenue cherish,
 Yet I alone, alone do me oppose 170
 Against the pope and count his friends my foes.

PAND. Then, by the lawful power that I have,
 Thou shalt stand cursed and excommunicate:
 And blessed shall he be that doth revolt
 From his allegiance to an heretic;
 And meritorious shall that hand be call'd,
 Canonized and worshipp'd as a saint,
 That takes away by any secret course
 Thy hateful life.

CONST. O, lawful let it be
 That I have room with Rome to curse awhile! 180
 Good father cardinal, cry thou amen
 To my keen curses; for without my wrong
 There is no tongue hath power to curse him right.

PAND. There's law and warrant, lady, for my curse.

CONST. And for mine too: when law can do no
 right,
 Let it be lawful that law bar no wrong:
 Law cannot give my child his kingdom here,
 For he that holds his kingdom holds the law;
 Therefore, since law itself is perfect wrong,
 How can the law forbid my tongue to curse? 190

PAND. Philip of France, on peril of a curse,
 Let go the hand of that arch-heretic;

180 *room . . . Rome*] the two words were pronounced the same by Elizabethans. Cf. *Jul. Cæs.*, I, ii, 156.

And raise the power of France upon his head,
Unless he do submit himself to Rome.

ELI. Look'st thou pale, France? do not let go thy hand.

CONST. Look to that, devil; lest that France repent,
And by disjoining hands, hell lose a soul.

AUST. King Philip, listen to the cardinal.

BAST. And hang a calf's-skin on his recreant limbs. \

AUST. Well, ruffian, I must pocket up these wrongs,
Because —

BAST. Your breeches best may carry them. 201

K. JOHN. Philip, what say'st thou to the cardinal?

CONST. What should he say, but as the cardinal?

LEW. Bethink you, father; for the difference
Is purchase of a heavy curse from Rome,
Or the light loss of England for a friend:
Forgo the easier.

BLANCH. That's the curse of Rome.

CONST. O Lewis, stand fast! the devil tempts thee
here
In likeness of a new untrimmed bride.

BLANCH. The Lady Constance speaks not from her
faith, 210
But from her need.

CONST. O, if thou grant my need,
Which only lives but by the death of faith,
That need must needs infer this principle,

209 *untrimmed bride*] bride undrest for the nuptial couch. "Un-
trimmed" is also found in the sense of "with hair hanging loose."

213 *infer*] prove.

That faith would live again by death of need.
O then, tread down my need, and faith mounts up;
Keep my need up, and faith is trodden down!

K. JOHN. The king is moved, and answers not to this.

CONST. O, be removed from him, and answer well!

AUST. Do so, King Philip; hang no more in doubt.

BAST. Hang nothing but a calf's-skin, most sweet lout. 220

K. PHI. I am perplex'd, and know not what to say.

PAND. What canst thou say but will perplex thee more,

If thou stand excommunicate and cursed?

K. PHI. Good reverend father, make my person yours,

And tell me how you would bestow yourself.

This royal hand and mine are newly knit,
And the conjunction of our inward souls
Married in league, coupled and link'd together
With all religious strength of sacred vows;
The latest breath that gave the sound of words 230
Was deep-sworn faith, peace, amity, true love
Between our kingdoms and our royal selves,
And even before this truce, but new before,
No longer than we well could wash our hands
To clap this royal bargain up of peace,
Heaven knows, they were besmear'd and overstain'd

225 *bestow yourself*] proceed to act.

235 *clap . . . up*] clinch by striking or shaking hands.

With slaughter's pencil, where revenge did paint
 The fearful difference of incensed kings:
 And shall these hands, so lately purged of blood,
 So newly join'd in love, so strong in both, 240
 Unyoke this seizure and this kind regret?
 Play fast and loose with faith? so jest with heaven,
 Make such unconstant children of ourselves,
 As now again to snatch our palm from palm,
 Unswear faith sworn, and on the marriage-bed
 Of smiling peace to march a bloody host,
 And make a riot on the gentle brow
 Of true sincerity? O, holy sir,
 My reverend father, let it not be so!
 Out of your grace, devise, ordain, impose 250
 Some gentle order; and then we shall be blest
 To do your pleasure and continue friends.

PAND. All form is formless, order orderless,
 Save what is opposite to England's love.
 Therefore to arms! be champion of our church,
 Or let the church, our mother, breathe her curse,
 A mother's curse, on her revolting son.
 France, thou mayst hold a serpent by the tongue,
 A chafed lion by the mortal paw,

240 *so strong in both*] *sc.* deeds of blood and deeds of love.

241 *regret*] salutation.

242 *fast and loose*] the name of a popular cheating game. See *L. L. L.*,
 I, ii, 149, and note.

254 *opposite*] hostile, adverse.

259 *chafed*] Theobald's emendation of the Folio reading *cased* (*i. e.*, confined or chained), which may be right.

mortal] deadly, fatal.

A fasting tiger safer by the tooth,
Than keep in peace that hand which thou dost hold. 260

K. PHI. I may disjoin my hand, but not my faith.

PAND. So makest thou faith an enemy to faith;
And like a civil war set'st oath to oath,
Thy tongue against thy tongue. O, let thy vow
First 'made to heaven, first be to heaven perform'd,
That is, to be the champion of our church.
What since thou swore'st is sworn against thyself
And may not be performed by thyself,
For that which thou hast sworn to do amiss 270
Is not amiss when it is truly done,
And being not done, where doing tends to ill,
The truth is then most done not doing it:
The better act of purposes mistook
Is to mistake again; though indirect,
Yet indirection thereby grows direct,
And falsehood falsehood cures, as fire cools fire
Within the scorched veins of one new-burn'd.
It is religion that doth make vows kept;
But thou hast sworn against religion, 280
By what thou swear'st against the thing thou swear'st,

270-273 *For that which . . . doing it*] The meaning of this negative mode of reasoning is that wrong, which you have sworn to do, is not wrong when the dictates of truth or rectitude are followed (and the act is not done); (the calls of) rectitude are best satisfied, when action which tends to evil is left undone.

275 *indirect*] wrong.

280-284 *Thou hast sworn . . . not to be forsworn*] Thou hast sworn against the dictates of religion by the oath (of alliance with England) which thou art taking against thy sworn obligation (to be

And makest an oath the surety for thy truth
 Against an oath: the truth thou art unsure
 To swear, swears only not to be forsworn;
 Else what a mockery should it be to swear!
 But thou dost swear only to be forsworn;
 And most forsworn, to keep what thou dost swear.
 Therefore thy later vows against thy first
 Is in thyself rebellion to thyself;
 And better conquest never canst thou make
 Than arm thy constant and thy nobler parts
 Against these giddy loose suggestions:
 Upon which better part our prayers come in,
 If thou vouchsafe them. But if not, then know
 The peril of our curses light on thee
 So heavy as thou shalt not shake them off,
 But in despair die under their black weight.

290

AUST. Rebellion, flat rebellion!

BAST.

Will 't not be?

Will not a calf's-skin stop that mouth of thine?

LEW. Father, to arms!

BLANCH.

Upon thy wedding-day?

300

Against the blood that thou hast married?

What, shall our feast be kept with slaughtered men?

Shall braying trumpets and loud churlish drums,

champion of the church), and thou art making an oath (this oath to King John) a certainty or guarantee of perjury (i. e., of thy truth against, of thy defiance of, an oath to the church): the oath of fidelity to the church (which thou hesitated to make) is an oath that does
 * not admit of perjury. The text follows the reading of the First Folios, but some changes have been introduced into the punctuation.

292 *suggestions*] temptations.

Clamours of hell, be measures to our pomp?
 O husband, hear me! ay, alack, how new
 Is husband in my mouth! even for that name,
 Which till this time my tongue did ne'er pronounce,
 Upon my knee I beg, go not to arms
 Against mine uncle.

CONST. O, upon my knee,
 Made hard with kneeling, I do pray to thee, 310
 Thou virtuous Dauphin, alter not the doom
 Forethought by heaven!

BLANCH. Now shall I see thy love: what motive may
 Be stronger with thee than the name of wife?

CONST. That which upholdeth him that thee upholds,
 His honour: O, thine honour, Lewis, thine honour!

LEW. I muse your majesty doth seem so cold,
 When such profound respects do pull you on.

PAND. I will denounce a curse upon his head.

K. PHI. Thou shalt not need. England, I will fall
 from thee. 320

CONST. O fair return of banish'd majesty!

ELI. O foul revolt of French inconstancy!

K. JOHN. France, thou shalt rue this hour within
 this hour.

BAST. Old Time the clock-setter, that bald sexton
 Time,

Is it as he will? well then, France shall rue.

304 *measures*] slow musical accompaniments, slow dance-tunes.

317 *muse*] wonder.

318 *profound respects*] important considerations.

320 *fall from thee*] revolt from thee. Cf. line 127, *supra*: "*fall over to my foes.*"

KING JOHN

ACT III

BLANCH. The sun's o'ercast with blood: fair day,
adieu!

Which is the side that I must go withal?

I am with both: each army hath a hand;

And in their rage, I having hold of both,

They whirl asunder and dismember me.

330

Husband, I cannot pray that thou mayst win;

Uncle, I needs must pray that thou mayst lose;

Father, I may not wish the fortune thine;

Grandam, I will not wish thy wishes thrive:

Whoever wins, on that side shall I lose;

Assured loss before the match be play'd.

LEW. Lady, with me, with me thy fortune lies.

BLANCH. There where my fortune lives, there my life
dies.

K. JOHN. Cousin, go draw our puissance together.

[Exit Bastard.]

France, I am burn'd up with inflaming wrath;

340

A rage whose heat hath this condition,

That nothing can allay, nothing but blood,

The blood, and dearest-valued blood, of France.

K. PHI. Thy rage shall burn thee up, and thou shalt
turn

To ashes, ere our blood shall quench that fire:

Look to thyself, thou art in jeopardy.

K. JOHN. No more than he that threats. To arms
let's hie!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II — THE SAME

PLAINS NEAR ANGIERS

Alarums, excursions. Enter the BASTARD, with AUSTRIA's head

BAST. Now, by my life, this day grows wondrous hot;
Some airy devil hovers in the sky,
And pours down mischief. Austria's head lie there,
While Philip breathes.

Enter KING JOHN, ARTHUR, and HUBERT

K. JOHN. Hubert, keep this boy. Philip, make up:
My mother is assailed in our tent,
And ta'en, I fear.

BAST. My lord, I rescued her;
Her highness is in safety, fear you not:
But on, my liege; for very little pains
Will bring this labour to an happy end.

[*Exeunt.* 10

SCENE III — THE SAME

Alarums, excursions, retreat. Enter KING JOHN, ELINOR, ARTHUR, the BASTARD, HUBERT, and Lords

K. JOHN. [*To Elinor*] So shall it be; your grace shall
stay behind .
So strongly guarded. [*To Arthur*] Cousin, look not sad:

2 airy] aerial. In the original *dramatis personæ* of the *Tempest*, Ariel is described as "an ayrie spirit."

5 Philip] The Bastard's original name, which King John changed to Richard, at I, i, 162. Philip (line 4) is the king of France.
make up] hurry up, make haste.

Thy grandam loves thee; and thy uncle will
As dear be to thee as thy father was.

ARTH. O, this will make my mother die with grief!

K. JOHN. [*To the Bastard*] Cousin, away for England!
haste before:

And, ere our coming, see thou shake the bags
Of hoarding abbots; imprisoned angels
Set at liberty: the fat ribs of peace
Must by the hungry now be fed upon: 10
Use our commission in his utmost force.

BAST. Bell, book, and candle shall not drive me back,
When gold and silver beckons me to come on.
I leave your highness. Grandam, I will pray,
If ever I remember to be holy,
For your fair safety; so, I kiss your hand.

ELI. Farewell, gentle cousin.

K. JOHN. Coz, farewell.

[*Exit Bastard.*]

ELI. Come hither, little kinsman; hark, a word.

K. JOHN. Come hither, Hubert. O my gentle
Hubert,

We owe thee much! within this wall of flesh 20
There is a soul counts thee her creditor,
And with advantage means to pay thy love:
And, my good friend, thy voluntary oath
Lives in this bosom, dearly cherished.
Give me thy hand. I had a thing to say,

8 *angels*] gold coins. Cf. II, i, 590, *supra*.

12 *Bell, book, and candle*] Implements of an ecclesiastical curse or ex-communication.

22 *advantage*] interest.

But I will fit it with some better time.

By heaven, Hubert, I am almost ashamed

To say what good respect I have of thee.

HUB. I am much bounden to your majesty.

K. JOHN. Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so
yet,

30

But thou shalt have; and creep time ne'er so slow,

Yet it shall come for me to do thee good.

I had a thing to say, but let it go:

The sun is in the heaven, and the proud day,

Attended with the pleasures of the world,

Is all too wanton and too full of gawds

To give me audience: if the midnight bell

Did, with his iron tongue and brazen mouth,

Sound on into the drowsy ear of night;

If this same were a churchyard where we stand,

40

And thou possessed with a thousand wrongs;

Or if that surly spirit, melancholy,

Had baked thy blood and made it heavy-thick,

Which else runs tickling up and down the veins,

Making that idiot, laughter, keep men's eyes

And strain their cheeks to idle merriment,

A passion hateful to my purposes;

Or if that thou couldst see me without eyes,

Hear me without thine ears, and make reply

Without a tongue, using conceit alone,

50

26 *time*] Pope's emendation of the Folios reading *tune*.

36 *gawds*] showy, idle ornaments.

39 *ear*] An accepted emendation of the Folio reading *raes* (*i. e.*, course).

50 *conceit*] thought.

Without eyes, ears and harmful sound of words;
Then, in despite of brooded watchful day,
I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts:
But, ah, I will not! yet I love thee well;
And, by my troth, I think thou lovest me well.

HUB. So well, that what you bid me undertake,
Though that my death were adjunct to my act,
By heaven, I would do it.

K. JOHN. Do not I know thou wouldst?
Good Hubert, Hubert, Hubert, throw thine eye
On yon young boy: I'll tell thee what, my friend, 60
He is a very serpent in my way;
And wheresoe'er this foot of mine doth tread,
He lies before me: dost thou understand me?
Thou art his keeper.

HUB. And I'll keep him so,
That he shall not offend your majesty.

K. JOHN. Death.

HUB. My lord?

K. JOHN. A grave.

HUB. He shall not live.

K. JOHN. Enough.

I could be merry now. Hubert, I love thee;
Well, I'll not say what I intend for thee:
Remember. Madam, fare you well:
I'll send those powers o'er to your majesty. 70

ELI. My blessing go with thee!

52 *brooded watchful day*] brooding vigilant day. The day is as vigilant,
as open-eyed, as an animal with a brood (to guard).

K. JOHN. For England, cousin, go :
Hubert shall be your man, attend on you
With all true duty. On toward Calais, ho ! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV — THE SAME

THE FRENCH KING'S TENT

Enter KING PHILIP, LEWIS, PANDULPH, and Attendants

K. PHI. So, by a roaring tempest on the flood,
A whole armado of convicted sail
Is scattered and disjoin'd from fellowship.

PAND. Courage and comfort ! all shall yet go well.

K. PHI. What can go well, when we have run so
ill ?

Are we not beaten ? Is not Angiers lost ?
Arthur ta'en prisoner ? divers dear friends slain ?
And bloody England into England gone,
O'erbearing interruption, spite of France ?

LEW. What he hath won, that hath he fortified : 10
So hot a speed with such advice disposed,
Such temperate order in so fierce a cause,

2 *armado of convicted sail*] armament or fleet of conquered or beaten sailing vessels.

6-7 *Angiers lost ? Arthur ta'en prisoner ?*] These events were not historically synchronous. Arthur's capture happened in 1202; the fall of Angiers four years later.

9 *O'erbearing interruption*] Putting down attempts to bar the way.

11 *with such advice disposed*] with such judgment regulated.

12 *cause*] action, course of action.

Doth want example: who hath read or heard
Of any kindred action like to this?

K. PHI. Well could I bear that England had this
praise,
So we could find some pattern of our shame.

Enter CONSTANCE

Look, who comes here! a grave unto a soul;
Holding the eternal spirit, against her will,
In the vile prison of afflicted breath.

I prithee, lady, go away with me.

20

CONST. Lo, now! now see the issue of your peace.

K. PHI. Patience, good lady! comfort, gentle Con-
stance!

CONST. No, I defy all counsel, all redress,
But that which ends all counsel, true redress,
Death, death; O amiable lovely death!

Thou odoriferous stench! sound rottenness!

Arise forth from the couch of lasting night,

Thou hate and terror to prosperity,

And I will kiss thy detestable bones

And put my eyeballs in thy vaulty brows

30

And ring these fingers with thy household worms

And stop this gap of breath with fulsome dust

And be a carrion monster like thyself:

Come, grin on me, and I will think thou smilest,

16 *some pattern*] some justifying precedent.

19 *the vile prison of afflicted breath*] Cf. IV, ii, 246, where John speaks
of his own corporeal frame as "this *confine* of blood and *breath*."

32 *gap of breath*] outlet of breath, mouth.

And buss thee as thy wife. Misery's love,
O, come to me!

K. PHI. O fair affliction, peace!

CONST. No, no, I will not, having breath to cry:
O, that my tongue were in the thunder's mouth!
Then with a passion would I shake the world;
And rouse from sleep that fell anatomy
Which cannot hear a lady's feeble voice,
Which scorns a modern invocation.

40

PAND. Lady, you utter madness, and not sorrow.

CONST. Thou art not holy to belie me so;
I am not mad: this hair I tear is mine;
My name is Constance; I was Geffrey's wife;
Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost:
I am not mad: I would to heaven I were!
For then, 't is like I should forget myself:
O, if I could, what grief should I forget!
Preach some philosophy to make me mad,
And thou shalt be canonized, cardinal;
For, being not mad but sensible of grief,
My reasonable part produces reason
How I may be deliver'd of these woes,
And teaches me to kill or hang myself:
If I were mad, I should forget my son,

50

35 *buss*] kiss.

Misery's love] Death is courted by misery. Cf. line 28, *supra*:
"Thou *hate* and terror to prosperity."

42 *modern*] commonplace. Cf. *As you like it*, II, vii, 156: "*modern*
instances."

44 *not holy*] The necessary negative article, which was omitted from
the first three Folios, was added by the Fourth Folio.

Or madly think a babe of clouts were he:
 I am not mad; too well, too well I feel
 The different plague of each calamity. 60

K. PHI. Bind up those tresses. O, what love I note
 In the fair multitude of those her hairs!
 Where but by chance a silver drop hath fallen,
 Even to that drop ten thousand wiry friends
 Do glue themselves in sociable grief,
 Like true, inseparable, faithful loves,
 Sticking together in calamity.

CONST. To England, if you will.

K. PHI. Bind up your hairs.

CONST. Yes, that I will; and wherefore will I do it?
 I tore them from their bonds and cried aloud, 70
 "O that these hands could so redeem my son,
 As they have given these hairs their liberty!"
 But now I envy at their liberty,
 And will again commit them to their bonds,
 Because my poor child is a prisoner.
 And, father cardinal, I have heard you say
 That we shall see and know our friends in heaven:
 If that be true, I shall see my boy again;
 For since the birth of Cain, the first male child,
 To him that did but yesterday suspire, 80
 There was not such a gracious creature born.

58 *a babe of clouts*] a rag-doll.

64 *friends*] Rowe's emendation of the original reading *fiends*.

68 *To England, if you will*] Constance appears to be answering the appeal addressed to her by King Philip at line 20, *supra*: "I
 • prithee, lady, go away with me."

80 *suspire*] breathe. Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, IV, v, 33: "Did he *suspire* . . ."

But now will canker sorrow eat my bud
 And chase the native beauty from his cheek
 And he will look as hollow as a ghost,
 As dim and meagre as an ague's fit,
 And so he'll die; and, rising so again,
 When I shall meet him in the court of heaven
 I shall not know him: therefore never, never
 Must I behold my pretty Arthur more.

PAND. You hold too heinous a respect of grief. 90

CONST. He talks to me that never had a son.

K. PHI. You are as fond of grief as of your child.

CONST. Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
 Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,
 Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
 Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
 Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;
 Then have I reason to be fond of grief.

Fare you well: had you such a loss as I,

I could give better comfort than you do. 100

I will not keep this form upon my head,

When there is such disorder in my wit.

O Lord! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son!

My life, my joy, my food, my all the world!

My widow-comfort, and my sorrows' cure! [Exit.

82 *canker sorrow*] sorrow like a canker-worm. The words are hyphened in the Folios.

90 *You hold . . . grief*] You commit heinous sin in paying excessive regard to your grief, in making too much of it.

91 *He talks . . . had a son*] Cf. Macduff's exclamation of Macbeth, "He has no children" (*Macb.* IV, iii, 216).

96 *parts*] qualities.

K. PHI. I fear some outrage, and I'll follow her. [*Exit.*]

LEW. There's nothing in this world can make me joy:
Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man;
And bitter shame hath spoil'd the sweet world's taste,
That it yields nought but shame and bitterness. 111

PAND. Before the curing of a strong disease,
Even in the instant of repair and health,
The fit is strongest; evils that take leave,
On their departure most of all show evil:
What have you lost by losing of this day?

LEW. All days of glory, joy and happiness.

PAND. If you had won it, certainly you had.
No, no; when Fortune means to men most good,
She looks upon them with a threatening eye. 120
'T is strange to think how much King John hath lost
In this which he accounts so clearly won:
Are not you grieved that Arthur is his prisoner?

LEW. As heartily as he is glad he hath him.

PAND. Your mind is all as youthful as your blood.
Now hear me speak with a prophetic spirit;
For even the breath of what I mean to speak
Shall blow each dust, each straw, each little rub,

108 *Life . . . tale*] Cf. *Macb.* V, v, 26-27: "It [*i. e.*, life] is a *tale*, Told by an idiot, etc." See also *Psalms*, xc, 9: "we spend our years as a *tale that is told*."

110 *the sweet world's taste*] Pope's generally accepted emendation of the Folios' reading *the sweet words taste*. But *the sweet word* of the Folios which is clearly "life" might well be retained (line 108, *supra*).

128 *rub*] technical term for obstruction in the game of bowls.

Out of the path which shall directly lead
Thy foot to England's throne; and therefore mark. 130
John hath seized Arthur; and it cannot be
That, whiles warm life plays in that infant's veins,
The misplaced John should entertain an hour,
One minute, nay, one quiet breath of rest.
A sceptre snatch'd with an unruly hand
Must be as boisterously maintain'd as gain'd;
And he that stands upon a slippery place
Makes nice of no vile hold to stay him up:
That John may stand, then Arthur needs must fall;
So be it, for it cannot be but so. 140

LEW. But what shall I gain by young Arthur's fall?

PAND. You, in the right of Lady Blanch your wife,
May then make all the claim that Arthur did.

LEW. And lose it, life and all, as Arthur did.

PAND. How green you are and fresh in this old
world!

John lays you plots; the times conspire with you;
For he that steeps his safety in true blood
Shall find but bloody safety and untrue.
This act so evilly born shall cool the hearts
Of all his people and freeze up their zeal, 150
That none so small advantage shall step forth
To check his reign, but they will cherish it;
No natural exhalation in the sky,

138 *Makes nice of*] Scrupulous about, sticks at.

146 *John lays you plots*] John lays plots in your interest.

147 *true blood*] pure, innocent blood. It is unnecessary to interpret the words as "blood of the rightful claimant to the throne."

No scope of nature, no distemper'd day,
 No common wind, no custom'd event,
 But they will pluck away his natural cause
 And call them meteors, prodigies and signs,
 Abortives, presages and tongues of heaven,
 Plainly denouncing vengeance upon John.

LEW. May be he will not touch young Arthur's life,
 But hold himself safe in his prisonment. 161

PAND. O, sir, when he shall hear of your approach,
 If that young Arthur be not gone already,
 Even at that news he dies; and then the hearts
 Of all his people shall revolt from him,
 And kiss the lips of unacquainted change,
 And pick strong matter of revolt and wrath
 Out of the bloody fingers' ends of John.
 Methinks I see this hurly all on foot:

And, O, what better matter breeds for you 170
 Than I have named! The bastard Faulconbridge
 Is now in England, ransacking the church,
 Offending charity: if but a dozen French
 Were there in arms, they would be as a call
 To train ten thousand English to their side,
 Or as a little snow, tumbled about,

154 *No scope of nature*] Nothing falling within the ordinary scope of nature.

156 *his natural cause*] its (the event's) natural cause.

158 *Abortives*] Abortions.

166 *unacquainted*] unknown, unwonted.

169 *hurly*] uproar, tumult; a form of hurlyburly.

174-175 *a call To train*] a cry to allure or entice. The terms belong to the practice of bird-catching.

Anon becomes a mountain. O noble Dauphin,
Go with me to the king: 't is wonderful
What may be wrought out of their discontent,
Now that their souls are topful of offence. 180
For England go: I will whet on the king.

LEW. Strong reasons make strong actions: let us go:
If you say ay, the king will not say no. [Exeunt.

182 *strong actions*] Thus the Second and later Folios. The First Folio
reads *strange actions*.

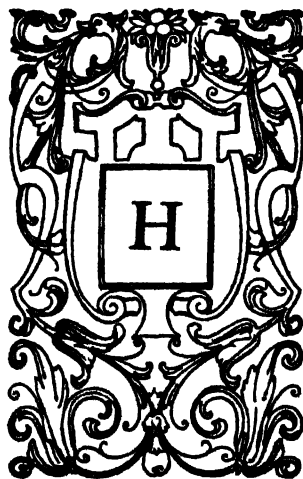


ACT FOURTH — SCENE

A ROOM IN A CASTLE

Enter HUBERT and Executioners

HUBERT



TEAT ME THESE IRONS

hot; and look thou stand
Within the arras: when I strike
my foot

Upon the bosom of the ground,
rush forth,

And bind the boy which you
shall find with me

Fast to the chair: be heedful:
hence, and watch.

FIRST EXEC. I hope your
warrant will bear out the deed.

HUB. Uncleanly scruples!
fear not you: look to 't.

[Exeunt Executioners.]

Young lad, come forth; I have to say with you.

Enter ARTHUR

ARTH. Good morrow, Hubert.

HUB.

Good morrow, little prince,

ARTH. As little prince, having so great a title 10
To be more prince, as may be. You are sad.

HUB. Indeed, I have been merrier.

ARTH. Mercy on me!

Methinks no body should be sad but I:

Yet, I remember, when I was in France,

Young gentlemen would be as sad as night,

Only for wantonness. By my christendom,

So I were out of prison and kept sheep,

I should be as merry as the day is long;

And so I would be here, but that I doubt

My uncle practises more harm to me: 20

He is afraid of me and I of him:

Is it my fault that I was Geoffrey's son?

No, indeed, is 't not; and I would to heaven

I were your son, so you would love me, Hubert.

HUB. [*Aside*] If I talk to him, with his innocent prate
He will awake my mercy which lies dead:

* Therefore I will be sudden and dispatch.

2 *Within the arras*] Behind the tapestry or hangings.

3 *the bosom*] the surface.

7 *Uncleanly scruples*] Thus the Folios. Both *unmanly* and *unseemly* have been substituted. But Hubert is speaking hastily and denounces as "foul" any doubt of his commission.

16 *for wantonness*] for freakishness or whimsical affectation. It was at one time a fashionable craze among Elizabethan youths to pretend a deep melancholy.

christendom] faith as a Christian.

* 19 *doubt*] fear, as in IV, ii, 102, V, vi, 44, *infra*. Cf. line 130, *infra*: "doubtless," i. e., fearless.

20 *practises*] wickedly contrives.

ARTH. Are you sick, Hubert? you look pale to-day:
 In sooth, I would you were a little sick,
 That I might sit all night and watch with you: 30
 I warrant I love you more than you do me.

HUB. [*Aside*] His words do take possession of my
 bosom.

Read here, young Arthur. [*Showing a paper.*]

[*Aside*] How now, foolish rheum!
 Turning despiteous torture out of door!
 I must be brief, lest resolution drop
 Out at mine eyes in tender womanish tears.
 Can you not read it? is it not fair writ?

ARTH. Too fairly, Hubert, for so foul effect:
 Must you with hot irons burn out both mine eyes?

HUB. Young boy, I must.

ARTH. And will you?

HUB. And I will.

ARTH. Have you the heart? When your head did
 but ache, 41

I knit my handkercher about your brows,
 The best I had, a princess wrought it me,
 And I did never ask it you again;
 And with my hand at midnight held your head,
 And like the watchful minutes to the hour,
 Still and anon cheer'd up the heavy time,
 Saying, "What lack you?" and "Where lies your
 grief?"

34 *dispiteous*] pitiless.

46* *watchful minutes to the hour*] minutes which keep regular and faithful watch while the hour is completing its course.

47 *Still and anon*] Every now and then.

Or "What good love may I perform for you?"
 Many a poor man's son would have lien still 50
 And ne'er have spoke a loving word to you;
 But you at your sick service had a prince.
 Nay, you may think my love was crafty love,
 And call it cunning: do, an if you will:
 If heaven be pleased that you must use me ill,
 Why then you must. Will you put out mine eyes?
 These eyes that never did nor never shall
 So much as frown on you.

HUB. I have sworn to do it;
 And with hot irons must I burn them out.
 ARTH. Ah, none but in this iron age would do it! 60
 The iron of itself, though heat red-hot,
 Approaching near these eyes, would drink my tears
 And quench his fiery indignation
 Even in the matter of mine innocence;
 Nay, after that, consume away in rust,
 But for containing fire to harm mine eye.
 Are you more stubborn-hard than hammer'd iron?
 An if an angel should have come to me
 And told me Hubert should put out mine eyes,
 I would not have believed him, — no tongue but
 Hubert's. 70

HUB. Come forth. [Stamps.]

52 *at your sick service*] at your service in your sickness.

63 *his*] *its*. Capell's ingenious emendation of the Folio reading *this*.

64 *matter*] Thus the Folios. Dyce and others ingeniously substitute
water. Cf. IV, iii, 107 *seq.*, *infra*: "Trust not those cunning *waters*

of his eyes . . . like *rivers* of remorse and *innocency*."

KING JOHN

ACT

Re-enter Executioners, with a cord, irons, &c.

Do as I bid you do.

ARTH. O, save me, Hubert, save me! my eyes are out
Even with the fierce looks of these bloody men.

HUB. Give me the iron, I say, and bind him here.

ARTH. Alas, what need you be so boisterous-rough?
I will not struggle, I will stand stone-still.

For heaven sake, Hubert, let me not be bound!

Nay, hear me, Hubert, drive these men away,

And I will sit as quiet as a lamb;

80

I will not stir, nor wince, nor speak a word,

Nor look upon the iron angrily:

Thrust but these men away, and I'll forgive you,

Whatever torment you do put me to.

HUB. Go, stand within; let me alone with him.

FIRST EXEC. I am best pleased to be from such a
deed. *[Exeunt Executioners.]*

ARTH. Alas, I then have chid away my friend!

He hath a stern look, but a gentle heart:

Let him come back, that his compassion may

Give life to yours.

HUB. Come, boy, prepare yourself.

80

ARTH. Is there no remedy?

HUB. None, but to lose your eyes.

ARTH. O heaven, that there were but a mote in
yours,

A grain, a dust, a gnat, a wandering hair,

Any annoyance in that precious sense!

Then, feeling what small things are boisterous there,

Your vile intent must needs seem horrible.

HUB. Is this your promise? go to, hold your tongue.

ARTH. Hubert, the utterance of a brace of tongues
Must needs want pleading for a pair of eyes:
Let me not hold my tongue, let me not, Hubert; 100
Or, Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue,
So I may keep mine eyes: O, spare mine eyes,
Though to no use but still to look on you!
Lo, by my troth, the instrument is cold
And would not harm me.

HUB. I can heat it, boy.

ARTH. No, in good sooth; the fire is dead with grief,
Being create for comfort, to be used
In undeserved extremes: see else yourself;
There is no malice in this burning coal;
The breath of heaven hath blown his spirit out 110
And strew'd repentant ashes on his head.

HUB. But with my breath I can revive it, boy.

ARTH. An if you do, you will but make it blush
And glow with shame of your proceedings, Hubert:
Nay, it perchance will sparkle in your eyes;
And like a dog that is compell'd to fight,
Snatch at his master that doth tarre him on.
All things that you should use to do me wrong
Deny their office: only you do lack
That mercy which fierce fire and iron extends, 120
Creatures of note for mercy-lacking uses.

99 *want pleading*] lack power of pleading.

107-108 *to be used In undeserved extremes*] at being used in extreme acts
of cruelty which are unmerited.

117 *Snatch . . . tarre*] Snap . . . incite to fight.

121 *Creatures . . . uses*] Things famous for their cruel uses.

HUB. Well, see to live; I' will not touch thine eye
For all the treasure that thine uncle owes:
Yet am I sworn and I did purpose, boy,
With this same very iron to burn them out.

ARTH. O, now you look like Hubert! all this while
You were disguised.

HUB. Peace; no more. Adieu.
Your uncle must not know but you are dead;
I'll fill these dogged spies with false reports:
And, pretty child, sleep doubtless and secure, 130
That Hubert, for the wealth of all the world,
Will not offend thee.

ARTH. O heaven! I thank you, Hubert.

HUB. Silence; no more: go closely in with me:
Much danger do I undergo for thee. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II — KING JOHN'S PALACE

Enter KING JOHN, PEMBROKE, SALISBURY, and other Lords

K. JOHN. Here once again we sit, once again crown'd,
And look'd upon, I hope, with cheerful eyes.

PEM. This "once again," but that your highness
pleased,
Was once superfluous: you were crown'd before,
And that high royalty was ne'er pluck'd off,
The faiths of men ne'er stained with revolt;

130 *doubtless and secure*] without fear and in confidence.

132 *offend*] hurt.

133 *closely*] secretly.

4 *once superfluous*] once too often.

Fresh expectation troubled not the land
With any long'd-for change or better state.

SAL. Therefore, to be possess'd with double pomp,
To guard a title that was rich before, 10
To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

PEM. But that your royal pleasure must be done,
This act is as an ancient tale new told,
And in the last repeating troublesome,
Being urged at a time unseasonable. 20

SAL. In this the antique and well noted face
Of plain old form is much disfigured;
And, like a shifted wind unto a sail,
It makes the course of thoughts to fetch about,
Startles and frights consideration,
Makes sound opinion sick and truth suspected,
For putting on so new a fashion'd robe.

PEM. When workmen strive to do better than well,
They do confound their skill in covetousness;
And oftentimes excusing of a fault 20
Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse,
As patches set upon a little breach

10 *guard*] ornament with trimmings, fringe, or facings.

24 *fetch about*] tack about, take a devious course, veer round.

26 *covetousness*] over-eager anxiety to excel others, to win fame.

28 *breach*] rent, tear.

Discredit more in hiding of the fault
Than did the fault before it was so patch'd.

SAL. To this effect, before you were new crown'd,
We breathed our counsel: but it pleased your highness
To overbear it, and we are all well pleased,
Since all and every part of what we would
Doth make a stand at what your highness will.

K. JOHN. Some reasons of this double coronation 40
I have possess'd you with and think them strong;
And more, more strong, then lesser is my fear,
I shall indue you with: meantime but ask
What you would have reform'd that is not well,
And well shall you perceive how willingly
I will both hear and grant you your requests.

PEM. Then I, as one that am the tongue of these, .
To sound the purposes of all their hearts,
Both for myself and them, but, chief of all,
Your safety, for the which myself and them 50
Bend their best studies, heartily request
The enfranchisement of Arthur; whose restraint
Doth move the murmuring lips of discontent
To break into this dangerous argument,—

38-39 *Since all . . . your highness will*] Since all our desires stop short
at, yield to, the will of your highness.

42-43 *And more, more strong . . . indue you with*] Thus the First Folio.
The meaning seems to be: "I shall impart to you many more and
more powerful reasons for my double coronation, and then my fear
(of your disapproval) will proportionately grow less."

48 *sound*] express, disclose.

50 *myself and them*] myself and they: a careless repetition of these
words from the previous line.

If what in rest you have in right you hold,
 Why then your fears, which as they say, attend
 The steps of wrong, should move you to mew up
 Your tender kinsman, and to choke his days
 With barbarous ignorance, and deny his youth
 The rich advantage of good exercise? 60
 That the time's enemies may not have this
 To grace occasions, let it be our suit
 That you have bid us ask his liberty;
 Which for our goods we do no further ask
 Than whereupon our weal, on you depending,
 Counts it your weal he have his liberty.

Enter HUBERT

K. JOHN. Let it be so: I do commit his youth
 To your direction. Hubert, what news with you?
 [*Taking him apart.*]

PEM. This is the man should do the bloody deed;
 He show'd his warrant to a friend of mine: 70
 The image of a wicked heinous fault
 Lives in his eye; that close aspect of his

55 *If what in rest . . . you hold*] If what you have peaceful and secure possession of, you hold lawfully.

57 *mew up*] confine: used technically of hawks.

61-62 *That the time's enemies . . . To grace occasions*] That agitators against the settled order of the age shall not have this cry to improve their opportunities of attack, to grace their campaign.

64-66 *Which for our goods . . . his liberty*] Which we ask for our advantage, only in so far as study of our welfare, which is dependent on you, reckons it to be for your welfare and to your benefit that Arthur should have his liberty.

72 *close aspect*] look of secrecy.

Does show the mood of a much troubled breast;
And I do fearfully believe 't is done,
What we so fear'd he had a charge to do.

SAL. The colour of the king doth come and go
Between his purpose and his conscience,
Like heralds 'twixt two dreadful battles set:
His passion is so ripe, it needs must break.

PEM. And when it breaks, I fear will issue thence 80
The foul corruption of a sweet child's death.

K. JOHN. We cannot hold mortality's strong hand:
Good lords, although my will to give is living,
The suit which you demand is gone and dead:
He tells us Arthur is deceased to-night.

SAL. Indeed we fear'd his sickness was past cure.

PEM. Indeed we heard how near his death he was,
Before the child himself felt he was sick:
This must be answer'd either here or hence.

K. JOHN. Why do you bend such solemn brows on
me? 80

Think you I bear the shears of destiny?
Have I commandment on the pulse of life?

SAL. It is apparent foul-play; and 't is shame
That greatness should so grossly offer it:
So thrive it in your game! and so, farewell.

PEM. Stay yet, Lord Salisbury; I'll go with thee,

77 *his purpose*] his wicked purpose of murdering Arthur.

78 *battles*] armies in battle array.

79 *His passion . . . break*] The image is that of a boil or tumour.

83 *apparent*] manifest.

85 *So thrive it in your game!*] Shamefully may your greatness thrive in
the game you are playing!

And find the inheritance of this poor child,
 His little kingdom of a forced grave.
 That blood which owed the breadth of all this isle,
 Three foot of it doth hold: bad world the while! 100
 This must not be thus borne: this will break out
 To all our sorrows, and ere long I doubt. [*Exeunt Lords.*]

K. JOHN. They burn in indignation. I repent:
 There is no sure foundation set on blood,
 No certain life achieved by others' death.

Enter a Messenger

A fearful eye thou hast: where is that blood
 That I have seen inhabit in those cheeks?
 So foul a sky clears not without a storm:
 Pour down thy weather: how goes all in France?

MESS. From France to England. Never such a
 power 110

For any foreign preparation
 Was levied in the body of a land.
 The copy of your speed is learn'd by them;
 For when you should be told they do prepare,
 The tidings comes that they are all arrived.

K. JOHN. O, where hath our intelligence been drunk?
 Where hath it slept? Where is my mother's care,

102 *doubt*] fear; as in IV, i, 19, *supra*, and V, vi, 44, *infra*. Cf. IV, i, 130, "doubtless" (i. e., fearless).

106 *fearful*] full of fear, frightened.

110 *From France to England*] "All goes from France to invade England;" a quibbling reply to the question "How goes all in France?"

116-117 *O, where hath . . . it slept?*] Cf. *Macb.* I, vii, 35-36; "Was the hope drunk Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?"

117 *care*] Thus the Second and later Folios. The First Folio prints the

That such an army could be drawn in France,
And she not hear of it?

MESS. My liege, her ear
Is stopp'd with dust; the first of April died 120
Your noble mother: and, as I hear, my lord,
The Lady Constance in a frenzy died
Three days before: but this from rumour's tongue
I idly heard; if true or false I know not.

K. JOHN. Withhold thy speed, dreadful occasion!
O, make a league with me, till I have pleased
My discontented peers! What! mother dead!
How wildly then walks my estate in France!
Under whose conduct came those powers of France
That thou for truth givest out are landed here? 130

MESS. Under the Dauphin.

K. JOHN. Thou hast made me giddy
With these ill tidings.

Enter the BASTARD and PETER of Pomfret

Now, what says the world
To your proceedings? do not seek to stuff
My head with more ill news, for it is full.

word obscurely, and it has been read both *care* and *cave*. *Eare* is not satisfactory here.

118 *drawn*] levied; cf. V, ii, 113: "drew."

120 *the first of April*] This is the precise date of Queen Elinor's death, in the year 1204.

122 *The Lady Constance . . . died*] Constance predeceased Queen Elinor, • in 1201, by three years, not, as in the text, by three days.

128 *How wildly . . . my estate*] How unsteadily goes, how tottering is, the state of my affairs.

BAST. But if you be afeard to hear the worst,
Then let the worst unheard fall on your head.

K. JOHN. Bear with me, cousin; for I was amazed
Under the tide: but now I breathe again
Aloft the flood, and can give audience
To any tongue, speak it of what it will. 140

BAST. How I have sped among the clergy-men,
The sums I have collected shall express.
But as I travell'd hither through the land,
I find the people strangely fantasied;
Possess'd with rumours, full of idle dreams,
Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear:
And here's a prophet, that I brought with me
From forth the streets of Pomfret, whom I found
With many hundreds treading on his heels;
To whom he sung, in rude harsh-sounding rhymes, 150
That, ere the next Ascension-day at noon,
Your highness should deliver up your crown.

K. JOHN. Thou idle dreamer, wherefore didst thou
so?

PETER. Foreknowing that the truth will fall out so.

K. JOHN. Hubert, away with him; imprison him;
And on that day at noon, whereon he says
I shall yield up my crown, let him be hang'd.
Deliver him to safety; and return,

138 *Under the tide*] King John compares himself to a swimmer, first,
bewildered and overwhelmed by the tide (of bad news) and, then,
mastering the rush of water.

144 *strangely fantasied*] subject to strange fancies.

158 *to safety*] to safe-keeping, safe-custody.

KING JOHN

ACT IV

For I must use thee. *[Exit Hubert with Peter.]*

O my gentle cousin,
Hear'st thou the news abroad, who are arrived? 160

BAST. The French, my lord; men's mouths are full
of it:

Besides, I met Lord Bigot and Lord Salisbury,
With eyes as red as new-enkindled fire,
And others more, going to seek the grave
Of Arthur, whom they say is kill'd to-night
On your suggestion.

K. JOHN. Gentle kinsman, go,
And thrust thyself into their companies:
I have a way to win their loves again;
Bring them before me.

BAST. I will seek them out.

K. JOHN. Nay, but make haste; the better foot
before. 170

O, let me have no subject enemies,
When adverse foreigners affright my towns
With dreadful pomp of stout invasion!
Be Mercury, set feathers to thy heels,
And fly like thought from them to me again.

BAST. The spirit of the time shall teach me speed. *[Exit.]*

K. JOHN. Spoke like a sprightly noble gentleman.
Go after him; for he perhaps shall need
Some messenger betwixt me and the peers;
And be thou he.

163 *as red*] *ac.* with anger.

171 *subject*] Thus the First Folio, which the Second and later Folios change to *subjects*. In any case, *subject* must be allotted a plural significance, like "people."

MESS. With all my heart, my liege. [*Exit.* 180

K. JOHN. My mother dead!

Re-enter HUBERT

HUB. My lord, they say five moons were seen to-night;
Four fixed, and the fifth did whirl about
The other four in wondrous motion.

K. JOHN. Five moons!

HUB. Old men and beldams in the streets
Do prophesy upon it dangerously:
Young Arthur's death is common in their mouths:
And when they talk of him, they shake their heads
And whisper one another in the ear;
And he that speaks doth gripe the hearer's wrist, 190
Whilst he that hears makes fearful action,
With wrinkled brows, with nods, with rolling eyes.
I saw a smith stand with his hammer, thus,
The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,
With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news;
Who, with his shears and measure in his hand,
Standing on slippers, which his nimble haste
Had falsely thrust upon contrary feet,
Told of a many thousand warlike French
That were embattailed and rank'd in Kent: 200
Another lean unwash'd artificer
Cuts off his tale and talks of Arthur's death.

K. JOHN. Why seek'st thou to possess me with these
fears?

198 *contrary feet*] the left foot into the right slipper, and *vice versa*.

"Contrary" is accented on the second syllable.

200 *embattailed*] drawn up in order of battle.

Why urgest thou so oft young Arthur's death?
Thy hand hath murder'd him: I had a mighty cause
To wish him dead, but thou hadst none to kill him.

HUB. No had, my lord! why, did you not provoke
me?

K. JOHN. It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves that take their humours for a warrant
To break within the bloody house of life, 210
And on the winking of authority
To understand a law, to know the meaning
Of dangerous majesty, when perchance it frowns
More upon humour than advised respect.

HUB. Here is your hand and seal for what I did.

K. JOHN. O, when the last account 'twixt heaven and
earth
Is to be made, then shall this hand and seal
Witness against us to damnation!
How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds
Make deeds ill done! Hadst not thou been by, 220
A fellow by the hand of nature mark'd,
Quoted and sign'd to do a deed of shame,
This murder had not come into my mind:
But taking note of thy abhorr'd aspect,

207 *provoke*] incite.

214 *More . . . respect*] From mere whim or caprice rather than from deliberate judgment.

220 *deeds ill*] Thus the Folios. Capell transposes the words, but the old reading makes the sense evident.

222 *Quoted*] The word is often used of books with annotations in the margin confirmatory of the text. Here the sense is "fully indicated" or "certified."

Finding thee fit for bloody villany,
Apt, liable to be employ'd in danger,
I faintly broke with thee of Arthur's death;
And thou, to be endeared to a king,
Made it no conscience to destroy a prince.

HUB. My lord, —

230

K. JOHN. Hadst thou but shook thy head or made a
pause

When I spake darkly what I purposed,
Or turn'd an eye of doubt upon my face,
As bid me tell my tale in express words,
Deep shame had struck me dumb, made me break off,
And those thy fears might have wrought fears in me:
But thou didst understand me by my signs
And didst in signs again parley with sin;
Yea, without stop, didst let thy heart consent,
And consequently thy rude hand to act
The deed, which both our tongues held vile to name.

240

Out of my sight, and never see me more!
My nobles leave me; and my state is braved,
Even at my gates, with ranks of foreign powers:
Nay, in the body of this fleshly land,
This kingdom, this confine of blood and breath,
Hostility and civil tumult reigns
Between my conscience and my cousin's death.

HUB. Arm you against your other enemies,
I'll make a peace between your soul and you.

250

226 *liable . . . danger*] disposed for employment in designs of danger.

246 *this confine of blood and breath*] my corporeal frame. Cf. III, iv,
19, *supra*, "the vile prison of afflicted breath."

Young Arthur is alive: this hand of mine
Is yet a maiden and an innocent hand,
Not painted with the crimson spots of blood.
Within this bosom never enter'd yet
The dreadful motion of a murderous thought;
And you have slander'd nature in my form,
Which, howsoever rude exteriorly,
Is yet the cover of a fairer mind
Than to be butcher of an innocent child.

K. JOHN. Doth Arthur live? O, haste thee to the
peers, 260
Throw this report on their incensed rage,
And make them tame to their obedience!
Forgive the comment that my passion made
Upon thy feature; for my rage was blind,
And foul imaginary eyes of blood
Presented thee more hideous than thou art.
O, answer not, but to my closet bring
The angry lords with all expedient haste.
I conjure thee but slowly; run more fast. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III — BEFORE THE CASTLE

• *Enter ARTHUR, on the walls*

ARTH. The wall is high, and yet will I leap down:
Good ground, be pitiful and hurt me not!
There's few or none do know me: if they did,

255 *motion*] suggestion, prompting. Hubert manifestly exaggerates the fact in denying all thought of murdering Arthur. Cf. IV, i, 25-27, *supra*.

This ship-boy's semblance hath disguised me quite.
 I am afraid; and yet I'll venture it.
 If I get down, and do not break my limbs,
 I'll find a thousand shifts to get away:
 As good to die and go, as die and stay. [*Leaps down.*
 O me! my uncle's spirit is in these stones:
 Heaven take my soul, and England keep my bones! 10
 [*Dies.*

Enter PEMBROKE, SALISBURY, and BIGOT

SAL. Lords, I will meet him at Saint Edmundsbury:
 It is our safety, and we must embrace
 This gentle offer of the perilous time.

PEM. Who brought that letter from the cardinal?

SAL. The Count Melun, a noble lord of France;
 Whose private with me of the Dauphin's love
 Is much more general than these lines import.

BIG. To-morrow morning let us meet him then.

SAL. Or rather then set forward; for 't will be
 Two long days' journey, lords, or ere we meet. 20

Enter the BASTARD

BAST. Once more to-day well met, distemper'd lords!
 The king by me requests your presence straight.

4 *semblance*] disguise.

11 *him*] i. e., the Dauphin.

16 *Whose private with me*] Thus the Folios. The text is suspicious.
 For *with me* one editor reads *missive* and another *witness*. "Private"
 must mean elliptically "private talk" or "intimation."

17 *general*] ample.

21 *distemper'd*] ruffled, out of temper. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 292-294:
 "The King, sir, . . . Is marvellous *distempered*."

SAL. The king hath dispossess'd himself of us:
We will not line his thin bestained cloak
With our pure honours, nor attend the foot
That leaves the print of blood where'er it walks.
Return and tell him so: we know the worst.

BAST. Whate'er you think, good words, I think, were
best.

SAL. Our griefs, and not our manners, reason now.

BAST. But there is little reason in your grief; 30
Therefore 't were reason you had manners now.

PEM. Sir, sir, impatience hath his privilege.

BAST. 'T is true, to hurt his master, no man else.

SAL. This is the prison. What is he lies here?

[Seeing Arthur.

PEM. O death, made proud with pure and princely
beauty!

The earth hath not a hole to hide this deed.

SAL. Murder, as hating what himself hath done,
Doth lay it open to urge on revenge.

BIG. Or, when doom'd this beauty to a grave,
Found it too precious-princely for a grave. 40

SAL. Sir Richard, what think you? have you beheld,
Or have you read or heard? or could you think?
Or do you almost think, although you see,
That you do see? could thought, without this object,
Form such another? This is the very top,

29 *reason*] talk, discourse.

32 *impatience hath his privilege*] Cf. *Lear*, II, ii, 65: "anger hath a
privilege."

40 *precious-princely*] Capell first hyphenated these words.

The height, the crest, or crest unto the crest,
 Of murder's arms: this is the bloodiest shame,
 The wildest savagery, the vilest stroke,
 That ever wall-eyed wrath or staring rage
 Presented to the tears of soft remorse.

50

PEM. All murders past do stand excused in this:
 And this, so sole and so unmatchable,
 Shall give a holiness, a purity,
 To the yet unbegotten sin of times;
 And prove a deadly bloodshed but a jest,
 Exemplified by this heinous spectacle.

BAST. It is a damned and a bloody work;
 The graceless action of a heavy hand,
 If that it be the work of any hand.

SAL. If that it be the work of any hand!
 We had a kind of light what would ensue:
 It is the shameful work of Hubert's hand;
 The practice and the purpose of the king:
 From whose obedience I forbid my soul,
 Kneeling before this ruin of sweet life,
 And breathing to his breathless excellence
 The incense of a vow, a holy vow,
 Never to taste the pleasures of the world,
 Never to be infected with delight,
 Nor conversant with ease and idleness,

60

70

49 *wall-eyed*] glaring-eyed. Cf. *Tit. Andr.*, V, i, 44: "*wall-eyed slave*" (i. e., the savage Aaron). "Wall," "whaul," or "whall" was a common name of the disease glaucoma, which discoloured the eye and abnormally enlarged the white portions.

50 *remorse*] pity. Cf. II, i, 478, *supra*, and line 110, *infra*.

54 *sin of times*] sin of future times.

Till I have set a glory to this hand,
By giving it the worship of revenge.

PEM. }
BIG. } Our souls religiously confirm thy words.

Enter HUBERT

HUB. Lords, I am hot with haste in seeking you:
Arthur doth live; the king hath sent for you.

SAL. O, he is bold and blushes not at death.
Avant, thou hateful villain, get thee gone!

HUB. I am no villain.

SAL. Must I rob the law?

[Drawing his sword.]

BAST. Your sword is bright, sir; put it up again.

SAL. Not till I sheathe it in a murderer's skin. 80

HUB. Stand back, Lord Salisbury, stand back, I say;
By heaven, I think my sword's as sharp as yours:
I would not have you, lord, forget yourself,
Nor tempt the danger of my true defence;
Lest I, by marking of your rage, forget
Your worth, your greatness and nobility.

BIG. Out, dunghill! darest thou brave a nobleman?

HUB. Not for my life: but yet I dare defend
My innocent life against an emperor.

72 *the worship of revenge*] the honour and dignity due to the performance of an act of vengeance.

79 *Your sword is bright*] Cf. *Othello*, I, ii, 59: "Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them."

84 *the danger of my true defence*] the danger of encountering me when making defence of my honesty.

87 *Out, dunghill*] a common term of opprobrium: repeated in *Lear*, IV, vi, 245.

SAL. Thou art a murderer.

HUB. Do not prove me so; 90

Yet I am none: whose tongue soe'er speaks false,
Not truly speaks; who speaks not truly, lies.

PEM. Cut him to pieces.

BAST. Keep the peace, I say.

SAL. Stand by, or I shall gall you, Faulconbridge.

BAST. Thou wert better gall the devil, Salisbury:
If thou but frown on me, or stir thy foot,
Or teach thy hasty spleen to do me shame,
I'll strike thee dead. Put up thy sword betime;
Or I'll so maul you and your toasting-iron,
That you shall think the devil is come from hell. 100

BIG. What wilt thou do, renowned Faulconbridge?
Second a villain and a murderer?

HUB. Lord Bigot, I am none.

BIG. Who kill'd this prince?

HUB. 'T is not an hour since I left him well:
I honour'd him, I loved him, and will weep
My date of life out for his sweet life's loss.

SAL. Trust not those cunning waters of his eyes,
For villany is not without such rheum;
And he, long traded in it, makes it seem

90-91 *Do not . . . am none*] Do not make me a murderer by forcing me to kill you. Hitherto, as yet, I am no murderer.

94 *gall*] hurt, torment.

99 *toasting-iron*] Similarly Nym in *Hen. V.* II, i, 7-8, calls his sword "mine iron," and says of it: "It will *toast* cheesc."

100 *date*] term.

100 *traded*] practised.

Like rivers of remorse and innocence. 110
 Away with me, all you whose souls abhor
 The uncleanly savours of a slaughter-house;
 For I am stifled with this smell of sin.

BIG. Away toward Bury, to the Dauphin there!

PEM. There tell the king he may inquire us out.

[*Exeunt Lords.*]

BAST. Here's a good world! Knew you of this fair
 work?

Beyond the infinite and boundless reach
 Of mercy, if thou didst this deed of death,
 Art thou damn'd, Hubert.

HUB. Do but hear me, sir.

BAST. Ha! I'll tell thee what; 120
 Thou 'rt damn'd as black — nay, nothing is so black;
 Thou art more deep damn'd than Prince Lucifer:
 There is not yet so ugly a fiend of hell
 As thou shalt be, if thou didst kill this child.

HUB. Upon my soul —

BAST. If thou didst but consent
 To this most cruel act, do but despair;
 And if thou want'st a cord, the smallest thread
 That ever spider twisted from her womb
 Will serve to strangle thee; a rush will be a beam
 To hang thee on; or wouldst thou drown thyself, 130
 Put but a little water in a spoon,
 And it shall be as all the ocean,

110 *remorse*] pity. Cf. line 50, *supra*, and also II, i, 478.

121 *damn'd as black*] A possible reminiscence of the blackened faces of
 those who played damned souls in the old miracle plays.

Enough to stifle such a villain up.
I do suspect thee very grievously.

HUB. If I in act, consent, or sin of thought,
Be guilty of the stealing that sweet breath
Which was embounded in this beauteous clay,
Let hell want pains enough to torture me.
I left him well.

BAST. Go, bear him in thine arms.
I am amazed, methinks, and lose my way 140
Among the thorns and dangers of this world.
How easy dost thou take all England up!
From forth this morsel of dead royalty,
The life, the right and truth of all this realm
Is fled to heaven; and England now is left
To tug and scramble and to part by the teeth
The unowed interest of proud-swellings state.
Now for the bare-pick'd bone of majesty
Doth dogged war bristle his angry crest
And snarleth in the gentle eyes of peace: 150
Now powers from home and discontents at home
Meet in one line; and vast confusion waits,
As doth a raven on a sick-fallen beast,
The imminent decay of wrested pomp.

133 *stifle* . . . up] "up" gives the verb the intensive force of "smother."

137 *embounded*] confined.

146 *scamble*] scramble, scuffle. Cf. *Hen. V*, I, i, 4: "the *scambling* and
unquiet time."

147 *unowed*] unowned, not in anybody's legal ownership.

152 *vast*] waste, wasting.

154 *wrested pomp*] greatness riotously wrested from its rightful owner.

Now happy he whose cloak 'and cincture can
Hold out this tempest. Bear away that child
And follow me with speed: I'll to the king:
A thousand businesses are brief in hand,
And heaven itself doth frown upon the land. [Exeunt.]

155 *cincture*] girdle, belt. The Folios read *center* (i. e., *ceinture*). Pope introduced the spelling *cincture*, which is rarely found in Elizabethan English.

158 *are brief in hand*] press for urgent despatch.

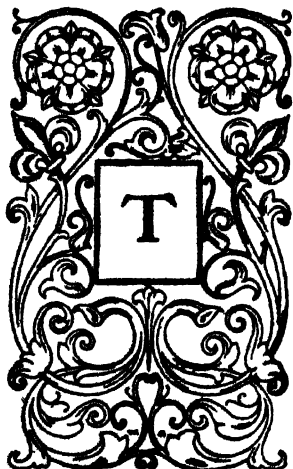


ACT FIFTH — SCENE I

KING JOHN'S PALACE

Enter KING JOHN, PANDULPH, and Attendants

KING JOHN



THUS HAVE I YIELDED UP
into your hand
The circle of my glory. [*Giving
the crown.*]

PAND. Take again
From this my hand, as holding of
the pope
Your sovereign greatness and
authority.

K. JOHN. Now keep your
holy word : go meet the French,
And from his holiness use all
your power

To stop their marches 'fore we are inflamed.
Our discontented counties do revolt ;
Our people quarrel with obedience,

2 *The circle*] The crown encircling the head.

7 *inflamed*] in flames, in conflagration.

Swearing allegiance and the love of soul 10
To stranger blood, to foreign royalty.
This inundation of mistempered humour
Rests by you only to be qualified:
Then pause not; for the present time's so sick,
That present medicine must be minister'd,
Or overthrow incurable ensues.

PAND. It was my breath that blew this tempest up,
Upon your stubborn usage of the pope;
But since you are a gentle convertite,
My tongue shall hush again this storm of war, 20
And make fair weather in your blustering land.
On this Ascension-day, remember well,
Upon your oath of service to the pope,
Go I to make the French lay down their arms. [*Exit.*]

K. JOHN. Is this Ascension-day? Did not the prophet
Say that before Ascension-day at noon
My crown I should give off? Even so I have:
I did suppose it should be on constraint;
But, heaven be thank'd, it is but voluntary.

Enter the BASTARD

BAST. All Kent hath yielded; nothing there holds out
But Dover Castle: London hath received, 31
Like a kind host, the Dauphin and his powers:
Your nobles will not hear you, but are gone

8 *counties*] counts, noblemen, in contrast with people in the next line;
not "shires."

10 *love of soul*] soul-felt love.

12 *mistempered*] disordered.

19 *convertite*] convert; especially a reclaimed apostate.

To offer service to your enemy,
And wild amazement hurries up and down
The little number of your doubtful friends.

K. JOHN. Would not my lords return to me again,
After they heard young Arthur was alive?

BAST. They found him dead and cast into the streets,
An empty casket, where the jewel of life 40
By some damn'd hand was robb'd and ta'en away.

K. JOHN. That villain Hubert told me he did live.

BAST. So, on my soul, he did, for aught he knew.
But wherefore do you droop? why look you sad?
Be great in act, as you have been in thought;
Let not the world see fear and sad distrust
Govern the motion of a kingly eye:
Be stirring as the time; be fire with fire;
Threaten the threatener, and outface the brow
Of bragging horror: so shall inferior eyes, 50
That borrow their behaviours from the great,
Grow great by your example and put on
The dauntless spirit of resolution.

Away, and glister like the god of war,
When he intendeth to become the field:
Show boldness and aspiring confidence.
What, shall they seek the lion in his den,
And fright him there? and make him tremble there?
O, let it not be said: forage, and run

35 *amazement*] panic, bewilderment.

55 *to become the field*] to fit or adorn the field, to join the fight with be-
fitting glory.

59 *forage*] range abroad in search of prey.

To meet displeasure farther from the doors,
And grapple with him ere he come so nigh. 60

K. JOHN. The legate of the pope hath been with me,
And I have made a happy peace with him ;
And he hath promised to dismiss the powers
Led by the Dauphin.

BAST. O inglorious league !
Shall we, upon the footing of our land,
Send fair-play orders and make compromise,
Insinuation, parley and base truce
To arms invasive ? shall a beardless boy,
A cocker'd silken wanton, brave our fields, 70
And flesh his spirit in a warlike soil,
Mocking the air with colours idly spread,
And find no check ? Let us, my liege, to arms :
Perchance the cardinal cannot make your peace ;
Or if he do, let it at least be said
They saw we had a purpose of defence.

K. JOHN. Have thou the ordering of this present time.

BAST. Away, then, with good courage ! yet, I know,
Our party may well meet a prouder foe. [Exeunt. 70

60 *displeasure*] disaster, annoyance.

66 *upon the footing of our land*] with our foot on our native land.

67 *fair-play orders*] stipulations of courteous conduct.

68 *Insinuation*] The act of ingratiating oneself, of making up to another.

69 *arms invasive*] invading forces.

70 *A cocker'd silken wanton*] A pampered daintily-arrayed effeminate.

71 *flesh his spirit in a warlike soil*] air his courage in a country of warriors.

78-79 *Away, then, . . . prouder foe*] On, then, with good hope. In spite of all omens I know that our side may well be able to cope with a stouter and more confident enemy.

SCENE II—THE DAUPHIN'S CAMP AT
ST EDMUNDSBURY

*Enter, in arms, LEWIS, SALISBURY, MELUN, PEMBROKE, BIGOT,
and Soldiers*

LEW. My Lord Melun, let this be copied out,
And keep it safe for our remembrance:
Return the precedent to these lords again;
That, having our fair order written down,
Both they and we, perusing o'er these notes,
May know wherefore we took the sacrament
And keep our faiths firm and inviolable.

SAL. Upon our sides it never shall be broken.
And, noble Dauphin, albeit we swear
A voluntary zeal and an unurged faith
To your proceedings; yet believe me, prince,
I am not glad that such a sore of time
Should seek a plaster by contemn'd revolt,
And heal the inveterate canker of one wound
By making many. O, it grieves my soul,
That I must draw this metal from my side
To be a widow-maker! O, and there
Where honourable rescue and defence

10

1 *this*] The first draft of the treaty with the English lords, which in line 3
is called "the precedent" (*i. e.*, the original document).

4 *our fair order*] our justly-arranged stipulation. Cf. V, i, 67, *supra*:
"fair-play orders."

16 *metal*] sword (of iron). Cf. *Tw. Night*, IV, i, 38: "put up your
iron."

Cries out upon the name of Salisbury !
 But such is the infection of the time, 20
 That, for the health and physic of our right,
 We cannot deal but with the very hand
 Of stern injustice and confused wrong.
 And is't not pity, O my grieved friends,
 That we, the sons and children of this isle,
 Were born to see so sad an hour as this ;
 Wherein we step after a stranger, march
 Upon her gentle bosom, and fill up
 Her enemies' ranks, — I must withdraw and weep 30
 Upon the spot of this enforced cause, —
 To grace the gentry of a land remote,
 And follow unacquainted colours here ?
 What, here ? O nation, that thou couldst remove !
 That Neptune's arms, who clippeth thee about,
 Would bear thee from the knowledge of thyself,
 And grapple thee unto a pagan shore ;
 Where these two Christian armies might combine
 The blood of malice in a vein of league,
 And not to spend it so unneighbourly !

19 *Cries out upon*] Exclaims against.

27 *a stranger*] a foreigner. The punctuation of the Folios, which is followed here, is often needlessly changed.

30 *Upon . . . cause*] Over the disgrace of this compulsory course (of action). Cf. "compulsion," line 44, *infra*.

34 *clippeth*] embraceth.

36 *grapple*] Pope's emendation of the Folios' reading *cripple*.

38 *in a vein of league*] into a vein of friendship.

39 *to spend*] "to" is grammatically superfluous. Steevens doubtfully proposed to hyphen it with spend (i. e., to-spend), thus giving the verb an intensive force.

LEW. A noble temper dost thou show in this; 40
 And great affections wrestling in thy bosom
 Doth make an earthquake of nobility.
 O, what a noble combat hast thou fought
 Between compulsion and a brave respect!
 Let me wipe off this honourable dew,
 That silverly doth progress on thy cheeks:
 My heart hath melted at a lady's tears,
 Being an ordinary inundation;
 But this effusion of such manly drops,
 This shower, blown up by tempest of the soul, 50
 Startles mine eyes, and makes me more amazed
 Than had I seen the vaulty top of heaven
 Figured quite o'er with burning meteors.
 Lift up thy brow, renowned Salisbury,
 And with a great heart heave away this storm:
 Commend these waters to those baby eyes
 That never saw the giant world enraged;
 Nor met with fortune other than at feasts,
 Full of warm blood, of mirth, of gossiping.
 Come, come; for thou shalt thrust thy hand as deep 60
 Into the purse of rich prosperity
 As Lewis himself: so, nobles, shall you all,

44 *compulsion*] Cf. line 30, *supra*: "this enforced cause."
a brave respect] considerations of honour and manliness.

46 *doth progress*] doth (make its) progress.

52 *vaulty top*] vaulted, vault-like roof. The sky is conventionally credited
 with a vaulted roof by Shakespeare and the poets of his own and
 later times.

59 *Full of warm blood*] The Folios read *Full warm of blood*. The
 transposition of the present text is not essential.
gossiping] merry, easy talk.

That knit your sinews to the strength of mine.
And even there, methinks, an angel spake:

Enter PANDULPH

Look, where the holy legate comes apace,
To give us warrant from the hand of heaven,
And on our actions set the name of right
With holy breath.

PAND. Hail, noble prince of France!
The next is this, King John hath reconciled
Himself to Rome; his spirit is come in, 70
That so stood out against the holy church,
The great metropolis and see of Rome:
Therefore thy threatening colours now wind up;
And tame the savage spirit of wild war,
That, like a lion foster'd up at hand,
It may lie gently at the foot of peace,
And be no further harmful than in show.

LEW. Your grace shall pardon me, I will not back:
I am too high-born to be propertied,

64 *even there . . . an angel spake*] A colloquialism expressive here of slyly ironical corroboration. Possibly a quibble is intended on the alleged mercenary motives of the speaker's English allies. The arrogant Dauphin has already spoken of "the *purse* of rich prosperity," and addressed Salisbury and his friends as "nobles" (the name of a familiar gold coin). "Angel," which is the name of another gold coin, may carry on the mercenary insinuation. For the punning collocation of "noble" and "angel" see *Much Ado*, II, iii, 29. Pandulph's convenient entry takes off the edge of the covert insult.

75 *foster'd up at hand*] brought up by hand, reared by human care.

79 *to be propertied*] to be treated like a contemptible theatrical property. Cf. *Tw. Night*, IV, 2, 88: "They have here *propertied* me."

To be a secondary at control, 80
Or useful serving-man and instrument
To any sovereign state throughout the world.
Your breath first kindled the dead coal of wars
Between this chastised kingdom and myself,
And brought in matter that should feed this fire;
And now 't is far too huge to be blown out
With that same weak wind which enkindled it.
You taught me how to know the face of right,
Acquainted me with interest to this land,
Yea, thrust this enterprise into my heart; 90
And come ye now to tell me John hath made
His peace with Rome? What is that peace to me?
I, by the honour of my marriage-bed,
After young Arthur, claim this land for mine;
And, now it is half-conquer'd, must I back
Because that John hath made his peace with Rome?
Am I Rome's slave? What penny hath Rome borne,
What men provided, what munition sent,
To underprop this action? Is 't not I
That undergo this charge? who else but I, 100
And such as to my claim are liable,
Sweat in this business and maintain this war?
Have I not heard these islanders shout out
"Vive le roi!" as I have bank'd their towns?
Have I not here the best cards for the game,
To win this easy match play'd for a crown?

80 *a secondary at control*] a subordinate under control.

89 *interest*] the claim I possess. Cf. line 166, *infra*.

104 *bank'd their towns*] passed along the river-banks about their towns.

"Coasted" is similarly used of vessels at sea.

And shall I now give o'er the yielded set?

No, no, on my soul, it never shall be said.

PAND. You look but on the outside of this work.

LEW. Outside or inside, I will not return 110

Till my attempt so much be glorified

As to my ample hope was promised

Before I drew this gallant head of war,

And cull'd these fiery spirits from the world,

To outlook conquest and to win renown

Even in the jaws of danger and of death.

[*Trumpet sounds.*]

What lusty trumpet thus doth summon us?

Enter the BASTARD, attended

BAST. According to the fair-play of the world,

Let me have audience; I am sent to speak:

My holy lord of Milan, from the king 120

I come, to learn how you have dealt for him;

And, as you answer, I do know the scope

And warrant limited unto my tongue.

107 *set*] bout (of a game).

113 *drew this gallant head of war*] levied this gallant fighting force.

"Drawn" is similarly used, IV, ii, 118, *supra*. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, iii, 284: "by raising of a head" (i. e., army).

115 *To outlook conquest*] To conquer by facing down, intimidating, overawing (resistance). "Outlook" has much the force of "out-face" in II, i, 97, *supra*: "out-faced infant state."

118 *the fair-play of the world*] the principles of fair-play recognized by the world.

121 *dealt*] negotiated, acted.

123 *limited*] set as limit, appointed.

PAND. The Dauphin is too wilful-opposite,
And will not temporize with my entreaties;
He flatly says he'll not lay down his arms.

BAST. By all the blood that ever fury breathed,
The youth says well. Now hear our English king;
For thus his royalty doth speak in me.
He is prepared, and reason too he should: 130
This apish and unmannerly approach,
This harness'd masque and unadvised revel,
This unhair'd sauciness and boyish troops,
The king doth smile at; and is well prepared
To whip this dwarfish war, these pigmy arms,
From out the circle of his territories.
That hand which had the strength, even at your door,
To cudgel you and make you take the hatch,
To dive like buckets in concealed wells,
To crouch in litter of your stable planks, 140
To lie like pawns lock'd up in chests and trunks,
To hug with swine, to seek sweet safety out
In vaults and prisons, and to thrill and shake

124 *wilful-opposite*] wrongheaded. The hyphen is due to Theobald.

132 *harness'd masque*] masque in armour.

unadvised] rash, irresponsible. Cf. II, i, 45 and 191, *supra*.

133 *unhair'd*] beardless: Theobald's brilliant emendation of the meaningless Folio reading *unheard*. At V, i, 69-70, *supra*, the Dauphin is similarly denounced as "a beardless boy, A cocker'd silken wanton." Cf. *Macb.*, V, ii, 10-11: "And many *unrough* youths that even now Protest their first of manhood."

138 *take the hatch*] take your departure by leaping the halfdoor, hurry off, take a hurried leap. Cf. "o'er the hatch," I, 171, *supra*.

140 *in litter . . . planks*] amid the litter of your stable-floors.

141 *pawns*] pledges in a pawnshop.

Even at the crying of your nation's crow,
 Thinking his voice an armed Englishman;
 Shall that victorious hand be feeble here,
 That in your chambers gave you chastisement?
 No: know the gallant monarch is in arms
 And like an eagle o'er his airy towers,
 To souse annoyance that comes near his nest. 150
 And you degenerate, you ingrate revolts,
 You bloody Neroes, ripping up the womb
 Of your dear mother England, blush for shame;
 For your own ladies and pale-visaged maids
 Like Amazons come tripping after drums,
 Their thimbles into armed gauntlets change,
 Their needles to lances, and their gentle hearts
 To fierce and bloody inclination.

LEW. There end thy brave, and turn thy face in
 peace;
 We grant thou canst outscold us: fare thee well; 160
 We hold our time too precious to be spent
 With such a brabblor.

PAND. Give me leave to speak.

BAST. No, I will speak.

LEW. We will attend to neither.

144 *your nation's crow*] the crowing cock is the French national bird.

146 *feeble*] enfeeble.

149 *o'er his airy towers*] soars or towers over the brood in his nest.

150 *souse*] pounce on.

151 *revolts*] men in revolt, deserters. Cf. V, iv, 7, *infra*.

156 *armed*] plated with steel.

159 *brave*] bravado, boasting.

162 *brabblor*] brawler.

Strike up the drums; and let the tongue of war
Plead for our interest and our being here.

BAST. Indeed, your drums, being beaten, will cry out;
And so shall you, being beaten: do but start

An echo with the clamour of thy drum,

And even at hand a drum is ready braced

That shall reverberate all as loud as thine;

170

Sound but another, and another shall

As loud as thine rattle the welkin's ear

And mock the deep-mouth'd thunder: for at hand,

Not trusting to this halting legate here,

Whom he hath used rather for sport than need,

Is warlike John; and in his forehead sits

A bare-ribb'd death, whose office is this day

To feast upon whole thousands of the French.

LEW. Strike up our drums, to find this danger out.

BAST. And thou shalt find it, Dauphin, do not doubt. 180

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III—THE FIELD OF BATTLE

Alarums. Enter KING JOHN and HUBERT

K. JOHN. How goes the day with us? O, tell me,
Hubert.

HUB. Badly, I fear. How fares your majesty?

K. JOHN. This fever, that hath troubled me so long,
Lies heavy on me; O, my heart is sick!

165 *interest*] claim. Cf. line 89, *supra*.

172 *rattle the welkin's ear*] rattle in the ear of heaven.

173 *deep-mouth'd*] deep-voiced.

177 *A bare-ribb'd death*] A skeleton. Cf. *Lucrece*, 1761: "a bare-bon'd death."

Enter a Messenger

MESS. My lord, your valiant kinsman, Faulconbridge,
Desires your majesty to leave the field
And send him word by me which way you go.

K. JOHN. Tell him, toward Swinstead, to the abbey
there.

MESS. Be of good comfort; for the great supply
That was expected by the Dauphin here, 10
Are wreck'd three nights ago on Goodwin Sands.
This news was brought to Richard but even now:
The French fight coldly, and retire themselves.

K. JOHN. Ay me! this tyrant fever burns me up,
And will not let me welcome this good news.
Set on towards Swinstead: to my litter straight;
Weakness possesseth me, and I am faint. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV — ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

Enter SALISBURY, PEMBROKE, and BIGOT

SAL. I did not think the king so stored with friends.

PEM. Up once again; put spirit in the French:
If they miscarry, we miscarry too.

9 *supply*] reinforcement; a noun of multitude. The verb in accord is
in the singular in the next line, and in the plural in the next line
but one.

12 *Richard*] the Bastard. Cf. I, i, 162, *supra*.

13 *retire themselves*] withdraw themselves, retreat.

16 *Swinstead*] Swineshead, near Spalding in Lincolnshire.

SAL. That misbegotten devil, Faulconbridge,
In spite of spite, alone upholds the day.

PEM. They say King John sore sick hath left the field.

Enter MELUN, wounded

MEL. Lead me to the revolts of England here.

SAL. When we were happy we had other names.

PEM. It is the Count Melun.

SAL. Wounded to death.

MEL. Fly, noble English, you are bought and sold; 10
Unthread the rude eye of rebellion
And welcome home again discarded faith.
Seek out King John and fall before his feet;
For if the French be lords of this loud day,
He means to recompense the pains you take
By cutting off your heads: thus hath he sworn
And I with him, and many moe with me,
Upon the altar at Saint Edmundsbury;
Even on that altar where we swore to you
Dear amity and everlasting love. 20

SAL. May this be possible? may this be true?

MEL. Have I not hideous death within my view,
Retaining but a quantity of life,

5 *In spite of spite*] Despite all disaster. Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, II, iii, 5.

7 *revolts*] men in revolt, deserters. Cf. V, ii, 151, *supra*.

10 *bought and sold*] tricked, befooled, betrayed.

11 *Unthread the rude eye*] Undo the evil, redress the wrong. The metaphor, of course, refers to the eye of a needle.

14 *loud*] boisterous, stormy.

15 *He*] i. e., The Dauphin.

17 *moe*] an old form of "more."

23 *quantity*] small quantity, modicum.

Which bleeds away, even as^a a form of wax
Resolveth from his figure 'gainst the fire?
What in the world should make me now deceive,
Since I must lose the use of all deceit?
Why should I then be false, since it is true
That I must die here and live hence by truth?
I say again, if Lewis do win the day, 30
He is forsworn, if e'er those eyes of yours
Behold another day break in the east:
But even this night, whose black contagious breath
Already smokes about the burning crest
Of the old, feeble and day-wearied sun,
Even this ill night, your breathing shall expire,
Paying the fine of rated treachery
Even with a treacherous fine of all your lives,
If Lewis by your assistance win the day.
Commend me to one Hubert with your king: 40
The love of him, and this respect besides,
For that my grandsire was an Englishman,
Awakes my conscience to confess all this.

24 *a form of wax*] a model or effigy of wax. Witches were credited with the practice of modelling a waxen figure of one whom they destined for destruction, and of causing the life to ebb as they melted the wax effigy before a fire.

25 *Resolveth from*] Dissolveth, melteth. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, ii, 129-130: "O, that this too too solid flesh would melt, Thaw and *resolve* itself into a dew!"

29 *hence*] in heaven.

37 *rated treachery*] treachery which has been duly appraised or assessed,
• to which a fixed penalty or fine has been allotted.

41 *respect*] consideration.

In lieu whereof, I pray you, bear me hence
 From forth the noise and rumour of the field,
 Where I may think the remnant of my thoughts
 In peace, and part this body and my soul
 With contemplation and devout desires.

SAL. We do believe thee: and beshrew my soul *
 But I do love the favour and the form 50
 Of this most fair occasion, by the which
 We will untread the steps of damned flight,
 And like a bated and retired flood,
 Leaving our rankness and irregular course,
 Stoop low within those bounds we have o'erlook'd,
 And calmly run on in obedience
 Even to our ocean, to our great King John.
 My arm shall give thee help to bear thee hence;
 For I do see the cruel pangs of death
 Right in thine eye. Away, my friends! New flight; 60
 And happy newness, that intends old right.

[*Exeunt, leading off Melun.*]

44 *In lieu whereof*] In return for which.

45 *rumour*] commotion, roar.

50 *favour*] aspect.

53 *bated*] diminished, baffled.

54 *rankness*] exuberance, overflow. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 71-72: "Rain added to a river that is rank, Perforce will force it overflow the bank."

55 *Stoop low . . . o'erlook'd*] Cf. III, i, 23, *supra*: "Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds."

61 *intends old right*] aims at establishing old right.

SCENE V — THE FRENCH CAMP

Enter LEWIS and his train

LEW. The sun of heaven methought was loath to set,
But stay'd, and made the western welkin blush,
When English measure backward their own ground
In faint retire. O, bravely came we off,
When with a volley of our needless shot,
After such bloody toil, we bid good night;
And wound our tottering colours clearly up,
Last in the field, and almost lords of it!

Enter a Messenger

MESS. Where is my prince, the Dauphin?

LEW. Here: what news?

MESS. The Count Melun is slain; the English lords 10
By his persuasion are again fall'n off,
And your supply, which you have wish'd so long,
Are cast away and sunk on Goodwin Sands.

4 *came we off*] we escaped.

7 *And wound . . . clearly up*] And completely furled our flags, which hung or waved limply (after the severe action of the day). *Tottering*, which is the intelligible reading of the Folios, has been needlessly changed to *tatter'd* by Pope and to *tattering* by Malone. "Tottered" is a common Elizabethan variant of "tattered," but no instance is accessible of "tottering" being used for "tattering" (as Malone suggests) in the sense of "hanging in tatters."

11 *fall'n off*] revolted. Cf. III, i, 127, *supra*: "*fall over to my foes*," and *ib.* 320, "*will fall from thee*."

LEW. Ah, foul shrewd fews ! beshrew thy very heart !
I did not think to be so sad to-night
As this hath made me. Who was he that said
King John did fly an hour or two before
The stumbling night did part our weary powers ?

MESS. Whoever spoke it, it is true, my lord.

LEW. Well ; keep good quarter and good care to-night : 20
The day shall not be up so soon as I,
To try the fair adventure of to-morrow. [Exit.

SCENE VI—AN OPEN PLACE IN THE NEIGHBOUR-
HOOD OF SWINSTEAD ABBEY

Enter the BASTARD and HUBERT, severally

HUB. Who's there ? speak, ho ! speak quickly, or I
shoot.

BAST. A friend. What art thou ?

HUB. Of the part of England.

BAST. Whither dost thou go ?

HUB. What's that to thee ? why may not I demand
Of thine affairs, as well as thou of mine ?

BAST. Hubert, I think.

HUB. Thou hast a perfect thought :
I will upon all hazards well believe

14 *shrewd* . . . *beshrew*] bitter or cursed . . . curse.

18 *stumbling night*] night which causes stumbling.

20 *good quarter*] strict guard.

3 *Of the part*] On the side.

Thou art my friend, that know'st my tongue so well.
Who art thou?

BAST. Who thou wilt: and if thou please,
Thou mayst befriend me so much as to think 10
I come one way of the Plantagenets.

HUB. Unkind remembrance! thou and eyeless night
Have done me shame: brave soldier, pardon me,
That any accent breaking from thy tongue
Should 'scape the true acquaintance of mine ear.

BAST. Come, come; sans compliment, what news
abroad?

HUB. Why, here walk I in the black brow of night,
To find you out.

BAST. Brief, then; and what's the news?

HUB. O, my sweet sir, news fitting to the night,
Black, fearful, comfortless and horrible. 20

BAST. Show me the very wound of this ill news:
I am no woman, I'll not swoon at it.

HUB. The king, I fear, is poison'd by a monk:
I left him almost speechless; and broke out
To acquaint you with this evil, that you might
The better arm you to the sudden time,
Than if you had at leisure known of this.

BAST. How did he take it? who did taste to him?

HUB. A monk, I tell you; a resolved villain,

12 *eyeless*] blind, dark: Theobald's emendation of the Folio reading
endless. Cf. *Lucrece*, 1013: "*sightless* night."

26 *to the sudden time*] to meet the emergency at once.

28 *taste*] test the purity of the food by tasting. A "sewer" (i. e., taster)
was an important officer of the king's household.

29 *resolved*] resolute, determined.

Whose bowels suddenly burst out: the king 30
Yet speaks and peradventure may recover.

BAST. Who didst thou leave to tend his majesty?

HUB. Why, know you not? the lords are all come
back,

And brought Prince Henry in their company;
At whose request the king hath pardon'd them,
And they are all about his majesty.

BAST. Withhold thine indignation, mighty heaven,
And tempt us not to bear above our power!

I'll tell thee, Hubert, half my power this night,
Passing these flats, are taken by the tide; 40

These Lincoln Washes have devoured them;
Myself, well mounted, hardly have escaped.

Away before: conduct me to the king;

I doubt he will be dead or ere I come. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII—THE ORCHARD AT SWINSTEAD ABBEY

Enter PRINCE HENRY, SALISBURY, and BIGOT

P. HEN. It is too late: the life of all his blood
Is touch'd corruptibly, and his pure brain,
Which some suppose the soul's frail dwelling-house,
Doth by the idle comments that it makes
Foretell the ending of mortality.

44 *doubt*] *fear*. Cf. *supra*, IV, i, 19, and IV, ii, 102, *supra*.

2 *corruptibly*] so as to cause corruption; malignantly (in the medical sense).

Enter PEMBROKE

PEM. His highness yet doth speak, and holds belief
That, being brought into the open air,
It would allay the burning quality
Of that fell poison which assaileth him.

P. HEN. Let him be brought into the orchard here.
Doth he still rage? *[Exit Bigot.]*

PEM. He is more patient 11
Than when you left him; even now he sung.

P. HEN. O vanity of sickness! fierce extremes
In their continuance will not feel themselves.
Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,
Leaves them invisible, and his siege is now
Against the mind, the which he pricks and wounds
With many legions of strange fantasies,
Which, in their throng and press to that last hold,
Confound themselves. 'Tis strange that death should
sing. 20

I am the cygnet to this pale faint swan,

13-14 *fierce extremes . . . feel themselves*] the worst pangs of illness,
when they persist, cease to give the sensation of bodily suffering;
they tend to render the mere flesh unconscious, insensible.

16 *Leaves them invisible*] Thus the Folio reading, which is not easy to
interpret. "Invisible" may, however, be used adverbially in the
sense of "imperceptibly." But Hanmer's suggested change of *in-*
sensible for *invisible* improves the general significance of the passage,
which implies that Death, having worked its evil will on the bodily
organs, passes from them to besiege or attack the mind.

19 *in their throng . . . hold*] in their tumult and hurry to reach the
last tenable part of the dying man.

Who chants a doleful hymn to his own death,
And from the organ-pipe of frailty sings
His soul and body to their lasting rest.

SAL. Be of good comfort, prince; for you are born
To set a form upon that indigest
Which he hath left so shapeless and so rude.

Enter Attendants, and BIGOT, carrying KING JOHN in a chair

K. JOHN. Ay, marry, now my soul hath elbow-room;
It would not out at windows nor at doors.
There is so hot a summer in my bosom, 30
That all my bowels crumble up to dust:
I am a scribbled form, drawn with a pen
Upon a parchment, and against this fire
Do I shrink up.

P. HEN. How fares your majesty?

K. JOHN. Poison'd, — ill fare — dead, forsook, cast
off:

And none of you will bid the winter come
To thrust his icy fingers in my maw,
Nor let my kingdom's rivers take their course
Through my burn'd bosom, nor entreat the north
To make his bleak winds kiss my parched lips 40
And comfort me with cold. I do not ask you much,
I beg cold comfort; and you are so strait
And so ingrateful, you deny me that.

P. HEN. O that there were some virtue in my tears,
That might relieve you!

26 *indigest*] crude chaotic mass.

42 *strait*] niggardly.

K. JOHN. The salt in them is hot.
 Within me is a hell; and there the poison
 Is as a fiend confined to tyrannize
 On unretrievable condemned blood.

Enter the BASTARD

BAST. O, I am scalded with my violent motion,
 And spleen of speed to see your majesty! 50

K. JOHN. O cousin, thou art come to set mine eye:
 The tackle of my heart is crack'd and burn'd,
 And all the shrouds wherewith my life should sail
 Are turned to one thread, one little hair:
 My heart hath one poor string to stay it by,
 Which holds but till thy news be uttered;
 And then all this thou seest is but a clod
 And module of confounded royalty.

BAST. The Dauphin is preparing hitherward,
 Where heaven He knows how we shall answer him; 60
 For in a night the best part of my power,
 As I upon advantage did remove,
 Were in the Washes all unwarily
 Devoured by the unexpected flood. [The king dies.]

SAL. You breathe these dead news in as dead an
 ear.
 My liege! my lord! but now a king, now thus.

58 *module of confounded royalty*] mould of ruined royalty. Cf. *All's Well*, IV, iii, 94.

60 *answer him*] meet his attack.

62 *upon advantage did remove*] moved the troops on the occurrence of
 (what seemed to be) a favourable opportunity.

P. HEN. Even so must I run on, and even so stop.
What surety of the world, what hope, what stay,
When this was now a king, and now is clay?

BAST. Art thou gone so? I do but stay behind 70
To do the office for thee of revenge,
And then my soul shall wait on thee to heaven,
As it on earth hath been thy servant still.
Now, now, you stars that move in your right spheres,
Where be your powers? show now your mended faiths,
And instantly return with me again,
To push destruction and perpetual shame
Out of the weak door of our fainting land.
Straight let us seek, or straight we shall be sought;
The Dauphin rages at our very heels. 80

SAL. It seems you know not, then, so much as we:
The Cardinal Pandulph is within at rest,
Who half an hour since came from the Dauphin,
And brings from him such offers of our peace
As we with honour and respect may take,
With purpose presently to leave this war.

BAST. He will the rather do it when he sees
Ourselves well sinewed to our defence.

SAL. Nay, it is in a manner done already;
For many carriages he hath dispatch'd 90
To the sea-side, and put his cause and quarrel
To the disposing of the cardinal:
With whom yourself, myself and other lords,

82 *The Cardinal Pandulph . . . at rest*] As a matter of history,
Pandulph had lately been succeeded as legate by Gualo, who
finally negotiated peace.

If you think meet, this afternoon will post
To consummate this business happily.

BAST. Let it be so: and you, my noble prince,
With other princes that may best be spared,
Shall wait upon your father's funeral.

P. HEN. At Worcester must his body be interr'd;
For so he will'd it.

BAST. Thither shall it then: 100
And happily may your sweet self put on
The lineal state and glory of the land!
To whom, with all submission, on my knee
I do bequeath my faithful services
And true subjection everlastingly.

SAL. And the like tender of our love we make,
To rest without a spot for evermore.

P. HEN. I have a kind soul that would give you
thanks
And knows not how to do it but with tears.

BAST. O, let us pay the time but needful woe, 110
Since it hath been beforehand with our griefs.
'This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.

97 *princes*] possibly an accidental error for *nobles*. The word seems wrongly repeated from the line before.

104 *bequeath*] transfer.

108 *give you thanks*] The Folios omit *you*, which Rowe inserted to complete the metre.

110-111 *O, let us pay . . . griefs*] O, let us pay the events no more than the essential due of mourning, since time has prefaced the catastrophe with afflictions enough.

Now these her princes are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,
If England to itself do rest but true. [Exeunt.]

116 *three corners of the world*] Cf. *Ant. and Cleop.*, IV, vi, 6: "the three-nook'd world." The reference is apparently to the three known continents — Europe, Africa, and Asia.

